THE
MYTHOLOGY AND RITES
OF THE
British Druids,

ASCERTAINED BY

NATIONAL DOCUMENTS;

AND COMPARED WITH THE

GENERAL TRADITIONS AND CUSTOMS OF HEATHENISM,
AS ILLUSTRATED BY THE MOST EMINENT
ANTIQUARIES OF OUR AGE.

WITH AN

APPENDIX,

CONTAINING

ANCIENT POEMS AND EXTRACTS,

WITH SOME

REMARKS ON ANCIENT BRITISH COINS.

AD QUÆ NOSCENDA ITER INGREDI, TRANSMITTERE MARE SOLEMUS, EA SUB OCULIS POSITA NEGLIGIMUS,—PLIN. L. VIII. Ep. 20.

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TO THE RIGHT REVEREND FATHER IN GOD,

RICHARD, LORD BISHOP OF LANDAFF.

MY LORD,

THE noble frankness with which your Lordship grants a favour, encourages me to hope, that you will pardon the liberty I now take, in prefixing your name to an Essay upon the Mythology and Rites of the Heathen Britons.

It is with diffidence I lay this subject before a man of your Lordship's distinguished character; whether in reference to private worth, to reputation in the world of letters, to rank in society, or to that zeal and ability which you have so successfully displayed in the defence of our holy religion.

But whatever the merits of this Work may be, I eagerly embrace the opportunity which it affords me, of acknowledging a debt of gratitude, in the audience of the Public.

When MR. HARDINGE, *amongst his other acts of generosity, which it is impossible for me to enumerate or to forget, pointed me out to your Lordship's notice, under the character of his friend, it was your good pleasure to place me in a respectable station in the Church, and thus confer upon me the comfort of independence.*

Your Lordship's manner of bestowing a benefit, is a great addition to its value; and whilst I am offering my humble tribute of thanks, it emboldens me to aspire to the preservation of your good opinion.

I have the honour to remain,
Your Lordship's much obliged
and devoted humble servant,
E. DAVIES.

PREFACE.

THE first section of the ensuing Essay, effects the principal objects of a Preface; yet the Author has not the confidence to intrude upon his Reader, without premising a few pages, to bespeak his attention, and conciliate his esteem — without offering some apology for the nature of his subject, and the manner in which it has been treated.

To some persons, the utility of such a work may not be obvious. It may be asked—*What interest has the present age, in a view of the errors and prejudices of the Pagan Britons?*

To obviate this, and similar inquiries, I would suggest the reflection, that the history of mankind is, in a great measure, the history of errors and prejudices—that the superstition we have now to contemplate, however absurd in itself, affected the general tone of thinking in several districts of Britain—that its influence continued to recent times, and has scarcely vanished at the present day. To an age of general inquiry, an investigation of the form and principles of this superstition, must surely be a subject of interest.

In our times, a spirit of research, which few are so unjust as to impute to idle curiosity, embraces all the regions of the known world: and is our own country the only spot that must be deemed unworthy of our attention?

Ancient and authentic documents, of the opinions and customs of the old Britons, have been preserved, though long concealed by the shades of a difficult and obsolete language. And can a dispassionate examination of their contents, which are totally unknown to the Public, be deemed a subject of no interest or utility?

These documents are found, upon investigation, to develope a system of religion, which, for many ages, influenced the affairs of the human race, not only in these islands, but also in the adjacent regions of Europe: and are we not to inquire in what this religion consisted, and what hold it took of the mind of man? Or is it an useless task, to expose the origin of some absurd customs and prejudices, which are still cherished in certain corners of our land? But it will be said—*The state of society amongst the ancient Britons was rude and unpolished; and their very religion opposed the progress of science and of letters.*

Be this admitted: yet the Britons, with all their barbarism and absurdities, constituted a link in the great chain of history. In addition to this, their affairs derive some importance from their rank amongst our own progenitors, their connection with our native country, and the remains of their monuments, which still appear in our fields. A prospect of the few advantages which they enjoyed, may furnish no unpleasant subject of comparison with our own times. A candid exposure of that mass of error under which they groaned, may inspire us with more lively gratitude for the knowledge of the true religion, and, perhaps, suggest a seasonable caution against the indulgence of vain speculation upon sacred subjects—a weakness to which the human mind is prone in every age.

Upon the whole, then, I humbly conceive, that an examination of our national reliques has been hitherto a *desideratum* in British literature; that the individual who has now attempted to draw them out of obscurity, is entitled to the candid attention of the Public; and that the time of the Reader, who may honour this volume with a candid perusal, will not have been spent in vain.

But of the manner in which this examination is conducted in the following Essay, I must speak with less confidence. As far as I know my own heart, truth, without favour or prejudice to the memory of our misguided ancestors, has been my object. Touching the light in which I view their ancient superstition, I must confess that I have not been the first in representing the *druidical,* as having had some connection with the *patriarchal religion;* but I know of no work already before the Public, which has unravelled the very slender threads by which that connection was maintained.

This difficult task I have attempted, by the aid of those Bards who were professed votaries of Druidism; and the undertaking was greatly facilitated by the labours of Mr. Bryant, which present a master-key to the mythology of the ancient world. That I cannot give my assent to the whole of this great man's opinion, has been already acknowledged:* but whilst I allow myself to object against the *slipper,* I contemplate the masterly outlines of the statue, with respect and admiration.

It is to be regretted, that this eminent mythologist was wholly unacquainted with the written documents of Druidism, preserved in this country. Had they been open to his investigation, he would have exhibited them to peculiar advantage, and he would have found them as strong in support of his general principles, as any remains of antiquity whatsoever.

I must here endeavour to obviate another objection. In the British poems, which treat of heathenish superstition, a sentence is often inserted, containing the name of *Christ,* or some allusion to his religion, and having no connection with the matter which precedes or follows. Some of these sentences I have omitted, for obvious reasons. I have been not a little puzzled to account for their admission into the text: but as all our remaining poems were composed or altered, subsequent to the first introduction of Christianity, it is probable that St. Augustin supplies us with the true reason of such admixture.

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* Celt. Res. p. 115.

"Qui seducunt per ligaturas, per precantationes, "per machinamenta inimici, inserunt præcantationibus suis nomen Christi: quia jam non possunt "seducere Christianos, ut dent venenum, addunt "mellis aliquantum, ut per id quod dulce est, lateat quod amarum est, et bibatur ad perniciem."*

In the selection of matter, the author has endeavoured to observe a medium, between that fastidious abruptness, which leaves many of the great outlines of a subject unmarked, and a minute prolixity, which scrutinizes every obscure corner of heathen abomination.

To future inquiry he leaves an open field, where some more handfuls may be gleaned, and approaches the reader with a consciousness, that as far as he has proceeded, his steps have been guided by integrity.

The subject of this volume having an intimate connection with that of the *Celtic Researches,* a short Index of that book is introduced. It is also to be had separate, and respectfully offered to my Subscribers, as a small tribute of gratitude for their liberal support, and as an acknowledgement of the favourable opinion with which I have been honoured, by some of the most distinguished characters, in that illustrious catalogue—men whose learning and talents are acknowledged, and whose judgment will be respected.

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* *Aug.* Tract. 7. in Joan. T. IX. p. 27.

As to the animadversions of professed critics, some of them were avowedly hostile. But their elaborate prolixity, which is no mark of contempt, affords some consolation for the malignity of their efforts. The work, and the strictures which it occasioned, are before the Public, which is of no party. To this upright and competent judge I appeal, with humble submission, neither vainly pleading an immunity from just censure, nor dreading the effects of those sarcasms, which arose from gross misrepresentation of my opinions, and perversion of my principles.

Upon one solitary occasion, I must beg leave to defend my own cause. The passage which I am about to quote, is not singled out as unworthy of the learning or candour of its author, but as involving a point, in which the Public may want an interpreter. It also affords me an opportunity of stating my reasons, for understanding the works of Taliesin somewhat differently from the *Critical Reviewer.*

" Let us now," says the critic, " compare this
" description of the Aborigines of Britain with that
" of Taliesin, a name before which every Welshman
" must bow; who was himself a Bard, perhaps a
" Druid, but converted from his Druidical idolatry
" to Christianity, and who is reported to have flou-
" rished in the sixth century of the Christian æra;
" consequently, about *six* hundred years before these
" Triads were ever attempted to be collected.* The
" poem we cite from is denominated the Pacification
" of Lludd."

The critic then gives his original, with the following translation:

" A numerous race, and fierce, as fame reports them,
" Were thy first colonists, Britain, chief of isles:

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* I am totally at a loss to conjecture upon what ground this assertion stands. I had mentioned some *copyists* of the Triads in the twelfth century; but I never supposed them to have been the original collectors.

"Natives of a country in Asia, and of the region of Gafis;
"A people said to have been skilful; but the district is
"unknown,
"That was mother to this progeny, these warlike adven-
"turers on the sea.
"Clad in their long dress, who could equal them?
"Celebrated is their skill: they were the dread
"Of Europe."

"Here," adds the triumphant critic, "instead of "being men of quiet dispositions, and abhorrent of "war, they are expressly declared to have been "fierce and *warlike adventurers*—unequalled, and "the *dread of Europe:* instead of coming from "Constantinople, and crossing the German haze, or "ocean, they are said to have wandered from the "region of Gafis, in Asia. Is it possible to imagine "a stronger contrast?"—*(Vide Critical Review,* August, 1804, p. 374.)

The contrast, as here drawn, is strong enough: but I must take the liberty to hint, that the critic, or his *prompter*, has perverted the whole of this vaunted passage, in consequence of having mistaken the meaning of a single word—*Dygorescynan,* which he renders *were the first colonists,* simply implies, *will again invade,* or, according to Mr. Owen, *will subjugate,* or *overcome:* so that the Bard does not describe the *Aborigines* of Britain, but a hostile race, who *invaded* or *subdued* the country.

The title of the poem, *Pacification of Lludd,* and a line, which informs us it was the pacification of *Lludd* and *Llefelis,* may furnish a clue to the æra of these invaders. *Lludd* and *Llefelis* are represented, by the Welsh chronicles, as brothers of Cassivellaunus, who fought with Cæsar, though it is pretty clear that, in simple fact, they were no other than those princes of the Trinobantes, whom the Roman historian mentions by the names of *Imanuentius* and *Mandubrasius.* Hence it appears, that these *first colonists of Britain* arrived in the age of Julius Cæsar.*

Let us now try to identify this warlike race. In the passage quoted by the critic, they are said to have sprung from a country in Asia, and the region of Gafis, or rather *Gafys.* Whoever has Welsh enough to translate Taliesin, must be fully aware, that it is the genius of that language to change *c* into *g*, and *p* into *f*. Let us then replace the original letters, and we shall have the region of *Capys*, a Trojan prince, who was the father of *Anchises*, and reputed ancestor of the *Romans.* Hence it may be conjectured, that these were the very people whom the Bard describes as having invaded Britain, in the time of Lludd and Llefelis; that is, in the age of Julius Cæsar.

But Critics must not be supposed to write at random, without some knowledge of their subject. As they claim respect from the Public, they must respect their own characters. And as our author has positively pronounced his warlike race *the first colonists of Britain,* it may be presumed, that his assertion has some adequate support in other parts of the poem. In order to determine this point, I shall exhibit the whole, for it is not long, with a translation as close and as faithful, to say the least of it, as that which we have in the preceding critique.

YMARWAR LLUDD.—*Bychan:*

Yn enw Duw Trindawd, cardawd cyfrwys!
Llwyth lliaws, anuaws eu henwerys,
Dygorescynnan Prydain, prif fan ynys;
Gwyr gwlad yr Asia, a gwlad Gafys;

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* The romantic chronicles of Archdeacon Walter, and Geoffry of Monmouth, and, after them, some late annotators on the Triads, say, that the Coranied, a Belgic tribe, arrived in the age of Lludd. This is evidently erroneous. The reader will see presently, that the Bard means the Romans, and no other people.

Pobl pwyllad enwir: eu tir ni wys
Famen: gorwyreis herwydd maris.
Amlaes eu peisseu; pwy ei hefelis?
A phwyllad dyvyner, ober efnis,
Europin, Arafin, Arafanis.
Cristiawn difryt, diryd dilis,
Cyn ymarwar Lludd a Llefelis.
Dysgogettawr perchen y Wen Ynys,
Rac pennaeth o Ryfein, cein ei echrys.
Nid rys, nid cyfrwys, Ri: rwyf ei araith
(A rywelei a ryweleis o anghyfieith)
Dullator pedrygwern, llugyrn ymdaith,
Rac Rhyuonig cynran baran goddeith.
Rytalas mab Grat, rwyf ei areith.
Cymry yn danhyal: rhyvel ar geith.
Pryderaf, pwyllaf pwy y hymdeith—
Brythonig yniwis rydderchefis.

PACIFICATION OF LLUDD—*Little* song.

In the name of the God *Trinity*,[*] exhibit thy charity!
A numerous race, of ungentle manners,
Repeat their invasion of Britain, chief of isles:[†]
Men from a country in Asia, and the region of Capys;[‡]
A people of iniquitous design: the land is not known
That was their mother.[§] They made a devious course by sea.
In their flowing garments,[‖] who can equal them?
With design are they called in,[¶] with their short spears,[**]
those foes

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[*] The Bard addresses himself to a Christian.

[†] The subject of the poem is Cæsar's second invasion. The particle *dy*, in composition, conveys the sense of *iteration*.

[‡] The district of Troy, whence the Romans deduced their origin.

[§] When the oracle commanded Æneas and his company—

Dardanidæ duri, quæ vos a stirpe parentum
Prima tulit tellus, eadem vos ubere læto
Accipiet reduces; antiquam exquirite Matrem—
Virg. Æn. III. V. 93.

We are informed, that they knew not where to find this *parent region*, and consequently wandered through various seas in search of it. To this tale the Bard evidently alludes.

[‖] The Roman toga, or *gown*.

[¶] We learn from Cæsar, as well as from the British Triads and chronicles, that the Romans were invited into this island by the princes of the Trinobantes, who were at war with Cassivellaunus.

[**] Such was the formidable *pilum*, as appears from a variety of Roman coins and sculptures.

Of the Europeans, the Aramites, and Armenians.*
O thoughtless Christian, there was oppressive toil,
Before the pacification of Lludd and Llefelis,†
The proprietor of the fair island‡ is ronsed
Against the *Roman* leader, splendid and terrible.
The King§ is not ensnared, as inexpert: he directs with his speech
(Having seen all the foreigners that were to be seen),
That the quadrangular swamp‖ should be set in order, by wayfaring torches,
Against the arrogant leader, in whose presence there was a spreading flame.¶
The son of Graid,** with his voice, directs the retaliation.
The Cymry burst into a flame—there is war upon the slaves.††
With deliberate thought will I declare the stroke that made them decamp.
It was the great exaltation of British energy.‡‡

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* The Romans had carried their arms, not only over the best part of Europe, but also into Aram, or Syria and Armenia, before they invaded Britain.

† These reputed brothers of Cassivellaunus, were the princes of the Trinobantes, who deserted the general cause of their country, and sent ambassadors to Julius Cæsar.

‡ The reader will see hereafter, that the ancient Bards conferred this title upon the solar divinity, and his chief minister.

§ That is Cassivellaunus, whose abilities and prudence are acknowledged by the Roman commander.

‖ The fortress or town of Cassivellaunus, *Silvis paludibusque munitum.* De Bell. Gall. L. V. c. 21.

¶ Relinquebatur ut neque longius ab agmine legionum discedi Cæsar pateretur, et tantum in agris vastandis, *incendiisque faciendis,* hostibus noceretur. Ib. c. 19.

** Grad, or *Graid,* the *sun.*—Cassivellaunus is called the son of *Beli,* which is another name of that deified luminary.

†† Those British tribes who voluntarily submitted to the Romans (see Cæsar, Ib. c. 20, 21), and on whom Cassivellaunus retaliated, after Cæsar's departure.

‡‡ The Bard, in a strain of venial patriotism, ascribes the departure of Cæsar and the Romans to the prowess of his countrymen. Other Bards have dropped pretty strong hints to the same purpose. Lucan says—

> Territa quæsitis ostendit terga Britannis.

And Pope, with less asperity—

> Ask why, from Britain Cæsar would retreat?
> Cæsar himself might whisper—*I was beat.*

By this time, I trust, I have made a convert of the critic. He will agree with me in thinking, that this little poem relates only to the invasion of Britain by Julius Cæsar; and that it contains not the most distant hint of its *first colonists*. The *strong contrast* has changed its position: but I abstain from farther remarks.

Criticism may be useful to the author who undergoes its chastisement, as well as to the Public. To the censor whose representation is just, whose reproof is liberal, who so far respects himself, as to preserve the character of a scholar and a gentleman, I shall attend with due regard. But if any professed judge of books can descend so low, as wilfully to pervert my words and meaning, to twist them into absurdity, and extract silly witticisms from his own conceits, I must be allowed to consider his strictures as foreign to myself and my work, and as little calculated to influence those readers whom I wish to engage.

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THE

MYTHOLOGY AND RITES

OF THE

British Druids.

SECTION I.

Preliminary Observations on the written Monuments of the early Britons. Their Authenticity proved, by the Test of classical Antiquity.

IN a retrospect of the state of society, which formerly prevailed in our country, the contemplative mind is not more agreeably, than usefully employed. Hence many writers, of distinguished eminence, have undertaken to elucidate the modes of thinking, and the customs of the early Britons, together with their religious opinions and superstitious rites. Upon this subject, many notices are scattered amongst the remains of Greek and Roman learning. These have been collected with diligence, arranged and appreciated with ingenuity. But here the research of our antiquaries has been checked, by the compass of their own studies, rather than by the defect of other existing monuments: whereas, upon a topic that claims investigation, every pertinent document ought to be considered; and especially, those documents which lead to a more intimate knowledge of the matter in hand.

What has hitherto remained undone, I have already hinted, in a volume which I lately published, under the most respectable and liberal patronage. I there stated, that certain ancient writings, which are preserved in the Welsh language, contain many new and curious particulars relative to the ancient religion and customs of Britain; and that, in this point of view, they would reward the research of the temperate and unprejudiced antiquary.

At that time, I had no thoughts of pursuing the investigation; but I have since taken up a fresh resolution, and it is the business of the present Essay to evince the truth of my assertion.

To this end, I shall employ an introductory section, in pointing out the particular writings of the Britons, upon which I ground my opinion; in shewing that those writings have been regarded as *druidical;* and in ascertaining, by historical tests, the authenticity of their pretensions.*

The British documents, to which I principally refer, are the poems of *Taliesin*, *Aneurin*, and *Merddin the Caledonian*, Bards who lived in the sixth century of the Christian æra. With these works, my acquaintance is not recent. I have possessed a good collated copy of them, in MS. since the year 1792. I have also the London edition of the same works, which appeared in the first volume of the *Myvyrian Archaiology of Wales,* in 1801.

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* In this Section, I must also take notice of the objections of some of my own countrymen, who, since the publication of the *Celtic Researches*, have industriously spread a report, that I do not produce the genuine traditions of the Welsh Bards. However little concern I might feel, for the mere accident of thinking differently from these men, yet, as I have made my opinion public, I deem it a duty which I owe to my own character, as well as to the generous patrons of my book, to shew, that I am competent to judge of the genuine remains of the Welsh; and that my representations of them have been fairly made, and from the best authorities that can be produced.

My own vindication will call for a few remarks, upon the grounds of the adverse opinion; but I hope to vindicate myself with temper.

To the primitive Bards, I add the historical and mythological notices, called *Triads,* published in the second volume of the same work; and though their compilers are not known, I shall use them freely, as far as I find their authority supported by general tradition, ancient manuscripts, and internal evidence.

Modern criticism having suggested some doubts as to the genuineness of the works ascribed to our ancient Bards, it may be expected, that I should offer something in their defence upon this score. But from the greatest part of this task I may fairly excuse myself, by a general reference to the *Vindication,* lately published by the learned and accurate Mr. Turner, who, in answer to all their adversaries, has stated, and fully substantiated the following proposition; namely,

" That there are poems, now existing in the Welsh, or
" ancient British language, which were written by *Aneurin.*
" *Taliesin, Llywarch Hên,* and *Merddin,* who flourished
" between the years 500 and 600."

This subject, the able advocate of our Bards has not handled slightly, or superficially. He carries them through every question of external and internal evidence, refutes all the main objections which have been urged against the works of the Bards, and concludes his Vindication by shewing, that there is nothing extraordinary in the fact, which his Essay is directed to substantiate; that these poems are attested by an unvaried stream of national belief; and that any suspicion about them has been of recent origin.*

The author of the Anglo-Saxon history, being interested only in the credit of the *historical* poems of these Bards, has directed his Vindication, principally, to the support of their cause; but as my subject leads me, more immediately, to examine certain pieces of another kind, which, from their mythological and mysterious allusions, have obtained the general appellation of *mystical poems,* candour requires, that I should state this gentleman's opinion of the latter, and plead something in their defence, where he seems to have deserted them.

Of these mystical pieces, Mr. Turner thus declares his sentiments.—" Some (of Taliesin's poems) are unintelligible, " because full of Bardic, or Druidical allusions." †

And again: " Of Taliesin's poetry, we may say, in ge- " neral, that his historical pieces are valuable; his others " are obscure: but, as they contain much *old mythology,* " and *Bardic imagery,* they are *worth attention,* because " some parts may be illustrated, and made intelligible." ‡

I have quoted these passages, at length, in order to shew my reader, that the author's censure is not directed against the pretensions of these poems to genuineness, or authenticity, but merely, against that degree of obscurity which they must, necessarily, present to every man who has not studied their subjects. And Mr. Turner's declared opinion, that *they are worth attention, as containing much old mythology,* certainly supposes, that they are ancient and authentic; I mean so far *authentic,* as to be real documents of British mythology.

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* *Vindication* of the *Genuineness* of the *Ancient British Bards*, 8vo. London, 1803. See p. 16 to 20.

† Ibid. p. 14.

‡ Ibid. p. 250.

That a critic, so candid, and so well informed, should have pronounced these poems, which peculiarly treat of Druidism, absolutely unintelligible; and especially, as he acknowledges the assistance of *Mr. Owen* and *Mr. Williams,* men who claim an exclusive acquaintance with the whole system of Bardic lore, may seem rather extraordinary: but the wonder will cease, when we shall have seen, that the information of these ingenious writers is drawn from another source; from a document which will appear to be, in many respects, irreconcilable with the works of the ancient Bards, or with the authority of the classical page.

Mr. Turner's censure, as we have seen, regards only the obscurity of the mystical poems: but as it is possible, that the candid zeal of criticism may mistake *obscure,* for *spurious,* it may be proper to produce some farther evidence in their favour. And here I may remark, that Mr. Turner was the first critic, who made a public distinction between the credit of the mystical, and the historical poems. The external evidence, in favour of both, is just the same. They are preserved in the same manuscripts; and an unvaried stream of national belief ascribes them, without distinction, to the authors whose names they bear.

Here I might rest the cause of these old poems, till they prove their own authenticity, by internal evidence, in the course of my Essay; did I not deem it requisite, to adduce some testimonies of the real existence of *Druidism,* amongst the Welsh, in the times of the native princes. These testimonies are collected from a series of Bards, who wrote in succession, from before the twelfth, to the middle of the fourteenth century. The genuineness of their works has never been disputed; and they, pointedly, allude to the mystical strains of Taliesin, and establish their credit, as derived from the source of Druidism.

* * *

MEUGANT, a Bard who lived in the seventh century, writes thus.

Cred i Dduw nad Derwyddon darogant
Pan torrer Dîn Brëon braint.*

" Trust in God, that those are no Druids, who prophesy,
" that the privilege of Dîn Brëon will be violated."

Dîn Brëon, the *Hill of Legislature,* was the sacred mount, where the Bards, the ancient judges of the land, assembled, to decide causes. The author here alludes to certain predictions, that the privilege of this court would be violated; but, at the same time, suggests a hope, that the prophets were not *real Druids,* and, consequently, that their forebodings might never be accomplished. This, surely, supposes, that *Druidical* predictions were known, in the days of Meugant, and that they were regarded as oracles of truth.

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* W. Archaiol. p. 161.

Golyddan, a Bard of the same century, asserts the existence of Druidical prophecies, and considers the destiny of Britain, as absolutely involved in their sentence.

Dysgogan Derwyddon maint a ddervydd:
O Vynaw hyd Lydaw yn eu llaw a vydd:
O Ddyved hyd Ddanet huz biduvydd, &c.*

" Druids vaticinate—a multitude shall arrive: from Me-
" nevia to Armorica shall be in their hand: from Dernetia
" to Thanet shall they possess."

Such passages bear testimony to the existence of certain, pretended, vaticinations, which were expressly ascribed to the Druids; and which the Britons, of the seventh century, contemplated with respect. It is also worthy of note, that Golyddan enrols *Merddin* the Caledonian in the list of his infallible Druids.

Dysgogan Merddin—cyvervydd hyn!

" It is Merddin who predicts—this will come to pass!"

Let us now hear the acknowledgment of a Bard, who was less favourable to the Druidical strain; or who, at least, did not think it meet to be employed in a Christian's address to his Creator.

Cuhelyn wrote, according to the table of the Welsh Archaiology, in the latter part of the eighth century.† A religious ode, which bears the name of this Bard, has the following passage:

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* W. Archaiol. p. 158.

† I think Mr. Owen has, more accurately, ascribed this work to *Cuhelyn ab Caw*, a Bard of the sixth century.

Cam. Biog. V. *Cuhelyn.*

Deus Rhëen rhymavy Awen.
Amen, fiat!

Fynedig wawd frwythlawn draethawd,
Rymibyddad.

Herwydd urdden awdyl Keridwen,
Ogyrwen amhad,

Amhad anaw areith awyrllaw
Y Caw ceiniad,

Cuhelyn Bardd Cymraeg hardd
Cyd wrthodiad

Certh cymmwynas, Ked cyweithas,
Ni vaintimad.

Cathyl cyvystrawd cyvan volawd,
Clutawd attad.

" God the Creator! Inspire my genius! Amen—be it " done! A prosperous song of praise, a fruitful discourse, " may I obtain. For the venerated song of *Ceridwen, the* " *Goddess of various seeds, of various seeds of Genius,* the " eloquence of the airy hand of the chaunter of Caw, Cu- " helyn, the elegant Welsh Bard would utterly reject. " The awful enjoyment of the society of Kêd could not be " maintained. A song of direct course, of unmixed praise, " has been offered to thee."*

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* There is another poem of Cuhelyn, which details some curious particulars of Bardic lore. It is introduced in the fourth section of this Essay.

The songs of *Ceridwen*—of the chaunters of *Caw*, and of the society of *Kêd*, as I shall make appear, are precisely the mystical strains ascribed to Taliesin, and the lore of the British Druids. And the Bard, by making a merit of not imitating *this kind of poetry*, in his address to the *Creator*, furnishes an undeniable evidence, that such composition was known in his time; that it was in high esteem amongst his countrymen; and that he deemed it unsuitable to the *purity* of Christian devotion.

Thus we find, that the mystic lore of the Druids, and those songs, which are *full of their old mythology*, were extant, and in repute, during the ages immediately subsequent to the times of *Aneurin*, *Taliesin*, and *Merddin*. Let us examine whether they were forgotten, in the ages of the more recent Welsh Princes.

The works of several Bards, who flourished in Wales during the interval, from the beginning of the twelfth, to the close of the fourteenth century, have been well preserved. They are now printed in the first volume of the Welsh Archaiology.

So far was Druidism from being either forgotten or neglected in this period, that one of the most curious subjects of observation, which present themselves upon the perusal of these works, is the constant allusion to certain *ancient* and *genuine* remains of the Druids, which had descended to the times of the respective authors. The principals amongst the Bards of these ages, appear very anxious to distinguish themselves from *mere poets*. They assert their own pretensions to the honour of the Druidical character, upon the plea of an accurate institution into the mysteries, and discipline, of those ancient sages; or upon a direct descent from their venerated blood. The reader shall have an opportunity of judging for himself.

MEILYR, a distinguished Bard, who flourished between the years 1120 and 1160, composed an elegy upon the death of two princes of his country, the first line of which runs thus.

> Gwolychav i'm Rhëen, Rex Awyr.[*]

" I will address myself to my sovereign, the King of the " Air."

This is an evident imitation of the first line of the *Chair of Ceridwen*—*Rhëen rym Awyr*[†]—" O Sovereign of the " power of the Air." This piece, therefore, which is one of the principal of Taliesin's mystical poems, was known to Meilyr the Bard.

GWALCHMAI, the son of Meilyr, wrote between the years 1150 and 1190.

In a poem, entitled *Gorhofedd*, or *The Boast*, he thus imitates the *Gorwynion*, a poem ascribed to Llywarch Hên, upon the subject of the mystical sprigs.

> Gorwyn blaen avall, bloden vagwy,
> Balch caen coed—
> Bryd pawb parth yd garwy.[‡]

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[*] W. Archaiol. p. 192.

[†] Ibid. p. 66.

[‡] Ibid. p. 193.

"The point of the apple tree, supporting blossoms,
"proud covering of the wood, declares—Every one's desire
"tends to the place of his affections."

In his elegy upon the death of Madawc, Prince of Powys, the same Bard exclaims,

Och Duw na dodyw
Dydd brawd, can deryw
Derwyddon weini nad—
Diwreiddiws Pywys peleidriad—rhyvel![*]

"Would to God the day of doom were arrived, since
"Druids are come, attending the outcry—*The gleaming*
"*spears of war have eradicated Powys.*"

The Bard had heard a report of the fall of his Prince; but he hoped it might be only a false rumour, till the news was brought by *Druids*. Here, then, we find the existence of Druids, in the middle of the twelfth century, positively asserted.

CYNDDELW, the great presiding Bard, and Gwalchmai's contemporary, has many remarkable passages, which imply the same fact. I shall select a few of the most obvious.

In his panegyric upon the celebrated Prince, *Owen Gwynedd*, we find the Bardic and the Druidical character thus united, and our author himself placed at the head of the order.

Beirnaid amregyd Beirdd am ragor:

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[*] W. Archaiol. p 202.

Ath volant Veirddion, Derwyddon Dôr
O bedeiriaith dyvyn, o bedeir ôr.
Ath gyvarwyre bardd bre breudor,
Cynddelw, cynhelw yn y cynnor.

" Bards are constituted the judges of excellence: and " *Bards* will praise thee, even *Druids* of the *circle*, of " four dialects, coming from the four regions. A Bard of " the *steep mount* will celebrate thee, even *Cynddelw*, the " first object in the gate.

In his elegy upon the death of the same Prince, Cynddelw mentions a prophecy of *Gwron*, whom the Triads represent as one of the first founders of Druidism.

Am eurglawr mwynvawr Môn
Nid gair gau êv goreu Gwron.

" Of the golden protector, the most courteous Prince of " Mona, no vain prophecy did Gwron deliver."

The same Cynddelw maintained a poetic contest for the Bardic chair of Madawc, Prince of Powys, against another Bard, named *Seisyll*, who asserts his claim to the honour, in virtue of his direct descent from the *primitive Bards*, or *Druids* of Britain, a distinction which his adversary could not boast.

Mi biau bôd yn bencerdd
O iawnllîn o iawnllwyth Culvardd;
A hŷn Cynddelw vawr, cawr cyrdd,
O hon ni henyw beirdd.*

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* W Archaiol. p. 210.

"It is my right to be master of song—being in a direct "line, of the true tribe, a Bard of the inclosure; but Cynddelw the great, the giant of song, is born of a race, "which has produced no Bards."

In his reply, Cynddelw makes light of this argument of his opponent, alledging that he himself was acknowledged to be distinguished by the discipline, the education, and the spirit of a primitive Bard.

Notwithstanding this, we find, by a poem addressed to the same Prince, that he was ready to allow the superior dignity of the Druidical line: and he speaks of this illustrious order as still in being.

> Nis gwyr namyn Duw a dewinion—byd,
> A diwyd Derwyddion
> O eurdorv, eurdorchogion,
> Ein rhîv yn rhyveirth avon.*

"Excepting God alone, and the diviners of the land, "and sedulous Druids, of *the splendid race, wearers of* "*gold chains,* there is none who knows our number, in the "billows of the stream."

These *billows,* as it will appear in the third section, allude to their initiation into the mysteries of the Druids.

The elegy on the death of Cadwallawn, the son of Madawc, assimilates the character of this Prince to that of *Menw,* or *Menyw,* recorded in the Triads as one of the first instructors and legislators of the Cymry. Here we have also a discrimination of some of the honours, which the Princes usually conferred upon the ancient Bards.

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* W. Archaiol. p. 212.

Agored ei lys i lês cerddorion—byd:
Eithyd i esbyd ei esborthion.
Ym myw Menw aches buches beirddion:
Ym buchedd gwledig gwlad orchorddion,
Gorddyvnas uddud bûdd a berthion
Gorwyddon tuthvawr tu hir gleision.*

"His hall was open for the benefit of the singers of the "land: for his guests he made provision. Whilst *Menw* "lived, the memorials of Bards were in request: whilst he "lived, the sovereign of the land of heroes, it was his "custom to bestow benefits and honour, and fleet coursers, "on the wearers of long blue robes."

In a poem addressed to *Owen Cyveiliawg,* Prince of Powys, who was himself a distinguished Bard, Cynddelw makes repeated mention of the *Druids,* and their *cerdd Ogyrven,* or *songs of the Goddess;* that is, the mystical strains of Taliesin. The piece opens thus.

Dysgogan Derwyddon dewrwlad—y esgar,
Y wysgwyd weiniviad:
Dysgweinid cyrdd cydneid cydnad,
Cyd voliant gwr gormant gormeisiad.

"It is commanded by Druids of the land, which dis-"plays valour to the foe—even by those administrators in "flowing robes—let songs be prepared, of equal move-

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* W. Archaiol. p. 220.

" ment and corresponding sound, the harmonious praise of " the hero, who subdues the ravager."

In the next page, we find the Bard imitating the Druidical lore, or the mystical strains of Taliesin, and representing his hero as having made no contemptible progress in the circle of transmigration.

Mynw ehovyn colovyn cyvwyrein,
Mûr meddgyrn mechdeyrn Mechein,
Mwyn Ovydd i veirdd y vaith goelvain—ran
Meirch mygyrvan cynghan cein.
Yn rhith rhyn ysgwyd
Rhag ysgwn blymnwyd
Ar ysgwydd yn arwain
Yn rhith llew rhag llyw goradain;
Yn rhith llavyn anwar llachar llain;
Yn rhith cleddyv claer clôd ysgain—yn aer
Yn aroloedd cyngrain;
Yn rhith draig rhag dragon Prydain;
Yn rhith blaidd blaengar yu Ywain.

" This intrepid hero, like a rising column, like a bulwark, round the meadhorns of the rulers of Mechain, as " a gentle ovate to the bards of the ample lot, imparts the " fair, lofty coursers, and the harmonious song.

" In the form of a vibrating shield, before the rising " tumult, borne aloft on the shoulder of the leader—in the " form of a lion, before the chief with the mighty wings " —in the form of a terrible spear, with a glittering " blade—in the form of a bright sword, spreading fame in " the conflict, and overwhelming the levelled ranks—in

" the form of a dragon, before the sovereign of Britain
" and in the form of a daring wolf, has Owen appeared."

After a few more sentences, the Bard presents us with a curious glimpse of the mystic dance of the Druids.

Drud awyrdwyth, amnwyth, amniver,
Drudion a Beirddion
A vawl nêb dragon.

" Rapidly moving, in the course of the sky, in circles,
" in uneven numbers, *Druids* and *Bards* unite, in cele-
" brating the leader."

The passages already cited, abundantly prove, not only that there were avowed professors of Druidism in North Wales and Powys, during the twelfth century, and that they regarded the same mystical lore, which is ascribed to Taliesin, as the standard of their system; but also, that their profession was tolerated, and even patronized, by the Princes of those districts.

That the case was nearly the same in South Wales, appears from several passages; and particularly, from a conciliatory address to *Rhys*, the Prince of that country; in which Cynddelw makes a general intercession for the *cause*, the *mysteries*, and the *worship* of the primitive Bards. He even introduces the sacred *cauldron*, which makes a principal figure in the mystical strains of Taliesin.

Corv eurdorv can do hwyv i adrev
Ith edryd ith adrawdd îs nêv
Par eurglawr erglyw vy marddlev!

Pair Prydain provwn yn nhangnev.
Tangnevedd am nawdd amniverwch—rîv,
Riallu dyheiddwch.
Nid achar llachar llavarwch;
Nid achles avles aravwch;
Nid achludd eurgudd argelwch;
Argel carth cerddorion wolwch.
Dôr ysgor ysgwyddeu amdrwch.
Doeth a drud am dud am degwch;
Tarv aergawdd, aergwl gadarnwch.

" O thou, consolidator of the comely tribe! since I am " returned home into thy dominion, to celebrate thee under " heaven—O thou, with the golden, protecting spear, hear " my Bardic petition! In peace, let us taste the cauldron " of Prydain. Tranquillity round the sanctuary of the " *uneven number*, with sovereign power extend! It (the " Bardic sanctuary) loves not vehement loquacity; it is no " cherisher of useless sloth; it opposes no precious, con- " cealed mysteries (Christianity): disgrace alone is ex- " cluded from *Bardic worship*. It is the guardian bulwark " of the breaker of shields. It is wise and zealous for " the defence of the country, and for decent manners; a " foe to hostile aggression, but the supporter of the faint " in battle."

In the elegy on the death of Rhiryd, as well as in the passage just cited, Cynddelw seems disposed to reconcile the mystical fables and heathen rites of Druidism, with the profession of Christianity; for, immediately after an invocation of the Trinity, he proceeds thus.

Mor wyv hygleu vardd o veird Ogyrven!
Mor wyv gwyn gyvrwyv nidwyv gyvyrwen!

Mor oedd gyvrin fyrdd cyrdd Kyrridwen:
Mor eisiau eu dwyn yn eu dyrwen![*]

"How strictly conformable a Bard am I, with the Bards "of the *mystic Goddess!* How just a director, but no impeder! How mysterious were the ways of the songs of "Ceridwen! How necessary to understand them in their "true sense!"

Here is a direct testimony in favour of those mystical songs, which deduce their origin from the *cauldron of Ceridwen,* and which the Bard regards as the standard of his own fanatical system. He professes to have understood them in their true sense; and that they were the genuine works of Taliesin, is declared in the same poem.

O ben Taliesin barddrin beirddring;
Barddair o'm cyvair ni bydd cyving.

"*From the mouth of Taliesin is the Bardic mystery concealed by the Bards;* the Bardic lore, by my direction, "shall be set at large."

Pliny's account of the *Ovum Anguinum* is sufficiently known: but it may be conjectured, from the language of Cynddelw, that the *angues,* or *serpents,* which produced these eggs, were the Druids themselves.

Tysiliaw terwyn gywrysed
Parth a'm nawdd adrawdd adrysedd—
Peris Nêr ór niver nadredd,
Praf wiber wibiad amrysedd.[†]

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[*] W. Archaiol. p. 230.

[†] Ibid. p. 243.

"Tysilio, ardent in controversy, respecting my sanc-
"tuary, declares too much. *Nêr* (the God of the ocean)
"*produced, out of the number of vipers, one huge viper,*
"*with excess of windings.*

Tysilio, the son of *Brochwel,* Prince of Powys, in the seventh century, wrote an ecclesiastical history of Britain, which is now lost. It is probable, from this passage, that an explanation and exposure of Druidical mythology, constituted part of his subject; and that the story of the *huge serpent,* was one of the fables which he ascribed to them.

These specimens may suffice to ascertain Cynddelw's opinion of the Druids, and their mystical lore. It is clear, this great Bard was, in profession, half a Pagan, and so he was regarded. Hence, the monks of Ystrad Marchell sent him notice, that they could not grant him the hospitality of their house whilst living, nor Christian burial when dead.*

LLYWARCH ab Llywelyn, was another *cathedral* Bard, who wrote between the years 1160 and 1220. He thus speaks of the privileges of his office, and his connection with the Druidical order.

Vy nhavawd yn vrawd ar Vrython
O vor Ut hyd vor Iwerddon.
Mi i'm deddv wyv diamryson,
O'r prîv veirdd, vy mhrîv gyveillion.†

"My tongue pronounces judgment upon Britons, from

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* W. Archaiol. p. 263.

† Ibid. p. 283.

" the British channel to the Irish sea. By my institute, I
" am an enemy to contention—of *the order of the primi-*
" *tive Bards, who have been my early companions.*"

He admits the power and efficacy of the mystical cauldron.

Duw Dovydd dym rydd reitun Awen—bêr
Val o bair Kyrridwen.*

" God, the Ruler, gives me a ray of melodious song, as
" if it were from the *cauldron of Ceridwen.*"

And again, in his address to Llywelyn, the son of Iorwerth, he acknowledges Taliesin as the publisher of the mystical train.

Cyvarchav i'm Rhên cyvarchvawr Awen,
Cyvreu Kyrridwen, Rhwyv Barddoni,
Yn dull Taliesin yn dillwng Elphin,
Yn dyllest Barddrin Beirdd vanieri.

" I will address my Lord, with the greatly greeting muse,
" with the dowry of *Kyrridwen, the Ruler of Bardism,*
" in the manner of Taliesin, when he liberated Elphin,
" when he overshaded the Bardic mystery with the banners
" of the Bards."†

In the same poem, the Bard speaks of Druidical vaticinations, as known in his time.

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* W. Archaiol. p. 290.

† Mr. Turner's Translation.

Darogan Merddin dyvod Breyenhin
O Gymry werin, o gamhwri:
Dywawd Derwyddon dadeni haelon,
O hîl eryron o Eryri.

" *Merddin prophesied,* that a King should come, from " the Cymry nation, out of the oppressed. *Druids have " declared, that liberal ones should be born anew, from the " progeny of the eagles of Snowdon."*

Such is the testimony of this venerable Bard, as to the genuineness of those mystical poems, which bore the name of *Taliesin* and *Merddin;* and in which the lore of the Druids was communicated to the Britons of his age.

ELIDYR SAIS, the contemporary of Llywarch, deduces the melody of his lines from the *mystic cauldron,* which had been the source of inspiration to *Merddin,* as well as to *Taliesin.*

Llethraid vy marddair wedi Merddin
Llethrid a berid o bair Awen.*

" Flowing is my bardic lay, *after the model of Merd-" din:* a smoothness produced from the cauldron of the " *Awen.*

PHILIP BRYDYDD was another Bard, who enjoyed the privilege of the *chair of presidency,* and wrote between the years 1200 and 1250. This author, alluding to a dispute, in which he had been engaged with certain pretended

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* W. Archaiol. p. 250, 252.

Bards, or mere poets, in the court of *Rhys*, Prince of South Wales, thus expresses his sentiments.

Cadair Vaelgwn hîr a huberid—i Veirdd;
Ac nid i'r goveirdd yd gyverchid:
Ac am y gadair honno heddiw bei heiddid
Bod se ynt herwydd gwîr a braint yd ymbrovid:
Byddynt Derwyddon pruddion Prydain;
Nis gwaew yn adain nid attygid.*

"The chair of the great Maelgwn was publicly prepared
" for *Bards;* and not to *poetasters* was it given in com-
" pliment: and if, at this day, they were to aspire to that
" chair, they would be proved, by truth and privilege, to
" be *what they really are:* the *grave Druids of Britain*
" *would be there;* nor could *these* attain the honour, though
" their wing should ach with fluttering."

The chair of *Maelgwn*, it is known, was filled by the *mystical Taliesin;* and the Bard declares, that *grave Druids*, whose prerogative it was to determine the merit of candidates for this chair, were still in being. In the same poem, he asserts the dignity of the Druidical order, and ridicules some popular errors respecting their scanty means of subsistence.

Ar y llen valchwen ni vylchid—y braint
Yd ysgarawd henaint ag ieuenctid.
  Rhwng y pren frwythlawn
  A'r tair prîv fynawn,
  Nid oedd ar îrgrawn
      Yd ymborthid.

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* W. Archaiol. p. 377.

" Of the proud *white* garment (the Druidical robe) which
" separated the elders from the youth, the privilege might
" not be infringed. Between the *fruit-bearing tree,* and
" the *three primary fountains,* it was not upon *green ber-*
" *ries* that they subsisted."

The *fruit-bearing tree* was the same as the *arbor frugifera* of *Tacitus,* and Merddin's *Avallen Beren*---the means of divining by lots, as will be seen hereafter. The *three mystical fountains* are the theme of Taliesin, in a poem which treats of the formation of the world. The Bard, therefore, implies, that religious mystery, and the profession of physiology, were sources from which the Druids derived a comfortable support.

HYWEL VOEL wrote between 1240 and 1280. In an ode, addressed to Owen, the son of Gruffudd, he compares his hero to *Gwron,* one of the three founders of Druidism, and acknowledges him as protector of the *city, or community of Bards.*

Digabyl wawr, gwriawr val Gwron,
Gwraidd blaid bliant arwyddon
Dinam hael, o hîl eryron,
Dinag draig dinas Cerddorian.†

" Fairly dawning, manly-like *Gwron,* the *root* whence
" sprung the pliable tokens (the mystical sprigs or lots)
" blameless and liberal, of the race of *eagles,* undoubted
" *dragon* (guardian) of the city of Bards."

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* W. Archaiol. p. 393.

We shall find, that *eagles* and *dragons* are conspicuous figures in Bardic mythology.

MADAWG DWYGRAIG lived at the period when the Welsh government was finally ruined, and wrote between the years 1290 and 1340. He thus laments the death of his patron, Gruffudd ab Madawg.

Yn nhair llys y gwys gwaisg ddygnedd,
Nad byw llun teyrnaidd llyw, llin teyrnedd
Balch y beirdd, bobl heirdd harddedd—HU ysgwr
Bryn, hynavwalch gwr brenhineidd wêdd.
Yn nhrevgoed i'n rhoed anrhydedd—Digeirdd
Ym, ac virein veirdd am overedd,
Yn gynt no'r lluchwynt arllechwedd—Ystrad.*

"In three halls is felt the oppression of anguish, that he "lives not, the chief of princely form, of the royal and "proud line of the Bards, a dignified race, the ornament "of HU, darting on the mount, most ancient of heroes, "of kingly presence. In the dwelling of the wood (the "sacred grove) honour was awarded to *us:* whilst uninstituted, though elegant Bards, were pursuing vanity "swifter than the sudden gale, that skims over the sloping "shore."

It will be seen hereafter that HU, to whom the Bards were devoted in their hallowed wood, was the great *dæmon god* of the British Druids.

We are now come down to the age of Edward the First, the reputed assassinator of the Bards, the tale of whose cruelty has been immortalized by the pen of Grey.

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* W. Archaiol. p. 481.

But here, fame has certainly calumniated the English King; for there is not the name of a single Bard upon record, who suffered, either by his hand, or by his orders. His real act was the removal of that patronage, under which the Bards had hitherto cherished the heathenish superstition of their ancestors, to the disgrace of our native Princes.

A threefold addition to such extracts as the preceding, might easily be made from the writers of this period; but, I trust, what is here produced, will be deemed an ample foundation for the following inferences:

1. That the ancient superstition of Druidism, or, at least, some part of it, was considered as having been preserved in Wales without interruption, and cherished by the Bards, to the very last period of the Welsh Princes.

2. That these Princes were so far from discouraging this superstitition, that, on the contrary, they honoured its professors with their public patronage.

3. That the Bards who flourished under these Princes, especially those who enjoyed the rank of *Bardd Cadair,* or filled the *chair of presidency,* avowed themselves true disciples of the ancient Druids.

4. That they professed to have derived their knowledge of Druidical lore, from the works of certain ancient and primitive Bards, which constituted their principal study, and which were regarded as genuine, and of good authority.

5. That amongst these masters, they mention, with eminent respect, the names of *Taliesin* and *Merddin;* and particularly extol that mystical lore, which was derived from the *cauldron* of *Ceridwen,* and published by the former of those Bards.

6. That they describe the matter contained in their sacred poems, as precisely the same which we still find in the mystical pieces, preserved under the names of *Taliesin* and *Merddin;* so that there can be no doubt as to the identity of those pieces.

And, 7. That upon the subject of genuine British tradition, they specifically refer to no writers which are now extant, as of higher authority than *Taliesin* and *Merddin.*

I therefore conclude, that the poems of the ancient Bards, here specified, however their value, as composition, may be appreciated, are to be ranked amongst the most authentic documents which the Welsh possess, upon the subject of British Druidism.

A diligent attention to the works of those Bards, will enable us to bring forward some other ancient documents, which have been drawn up in a concise and singular form, for the purpose of assisting the memory; which are evidently derived from the sources of primitive Bardic lore;

and therefore are undoubted repositories of genuine British tradition.

The documents I mean, are those which are generally called the *historical Triads,* though many of them, strictly speaking, are purely mythological.

These documents have lately been treated with much affected and unmerited contempt.

It is admitted, that the notices contained in some few of the Triads, appear, upon a superficial view, to be either absurd or trifling; and it may be inferred, from one or two others, that the Welsh had not wholly relinquished this mode of composition, till a short period before the dissolution of their national government.

It is also acknowledged, that the testimony of copyists, as to the antiquity of the MSS. which they consulted, goes no higher than to the tenth century.

But these circumstances will hardly justify some modern critics in the assertion, that the Triads are altogether futile; that they are modern; that there is no proof of their containing genuine Welsh tradition; and that they were never collected in writing before the date of those MSS. which are expressly recorded.

Hardy assertion and dogmatical judgment are soon pronounced; but the candid and consistent antiquary, who shall refuse any degree of credit to the British Triads, will find many things to *prove,* as well as to *assert,* before he comes to his conclusion.

I know of no peculiarity in the habits of the Celtic nations more prevalent, or which can be traced to higher antiquity, than their propensity to make *ternary arrangements*—to describe one thing under three distinct heads, or to bring three distinct objects under one point of view.

This feature presents itself in their geographical and political schemes. The nations of Gaul were divided into *three* great confederacies; the *Belgæ,* the *Aquitani,* and the proper *Celtæ:* and these were united in one body, by the *Concilium totius Galliæ,* in which we find that the members of each confederacy had equally their seat.*

Again: we are told, that *in omni Galliâ,* or throughout these *three* confederacies, the inhabitants were distributed into three ranks—the *Druidæ,* the *Equites,* and the *Plebes;* and that the priesthood was subdivided into *Druids, Bards,* and *Ovates.*

The Britons, in like manner, divided their island into *Lloeger, Cymru* ag *Alban:* and when they were shut up in Wales, that district, without regard to the actual number of their reigning Princes, constituted *three* regions, called *Gwynedd, Pywys* a *Deheubarth;* and each of these was distributed into a number of *Cantrevs, Cwmmwds,* and *Trevs.*

That this humour of *ternary* classification pervaded the Druidical school, I have already shewn from ancient authority; which presents us with the only maxims of the Druids, which had become public, in the identical form of Welsh Triads.

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* Cæs. de Bell. Gal. L. I. c. 30.—L. VI. c. 3.

The ancient Welsh laws, which were revised by Howel Dda in the former part of the tenth century, present us with a long book of *Triads,* and these are called *Trioedd Cyvraith, Triades Forenses,** by way of distinction from the well-known *Trioedd Ynys Prydain.*

Will it be said, that this national partiality to *Triads* had been forgotten for ages, and was afterwards renewed by the Welsh of the tenth century? Or, if a dashing critic were to hazard the assertion, how is he to support it?

Mr. Turner has demonstrated, that the *Gododin* of *Aneurin* is a genuine composition of the sixth century. But so fond were the Britons of the *ternary arrangement,* in the days of Aneurin, that in one single page of that work, he distinctly recites the titles of *ten Triads,* and that merely in the description of an army.

Taliesin, the contemporary of this Bard, is full of allusion to *Triads,* which had existed from remote antiquity, and which he cites with respect, by way of authority.

For example.

1. Tair fynawn y sydd. W. Archaiol. p. 20.
2. Trydydd par yngnad, p. 35.
3. Tri thri nodded.
4. Tri charn avlawg, p. 44.
5. Tri lloneid Prydwen, p. 45.
6. Tri wyr nod, p. 48.
7. Tair blynedd dihedd, p. 49.
8. Tri dillyn diachor.

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* Wotton's Leg. Wall. L. IV. p. 298.

9. Tair llynges yn aches.
10. Tri diwedydd cad.
11. Tri phriawd Gwlad, p. 64.
12. Trydedd dovn doethur.
13. Tri chynweisad.
14. Tri chyvarwydd, p. 65, &c. &c.

That Triads were perfectly familiar to the age of *Aneurin* and *Taliesin*, is a fact which needs no farther proof: and I know of no reason to surmise, that they had not been committed to writing before that period.

Some of the identical Triads, mentioned by the oldest Bards, are still preserved; others have been lost. We do not possess a complete collection* of these scraps of antiquity. The respectable antiquary, Thomas Jones, of Tregaron, informs us, that in the year 1601, he could recover only 126 out of THE THREE HUNDRED, a definite number of which he had some particular account. The research of later times has not been competent to make up the deficiency.†

As the authority of the Triads was quoted, with eminent respect, by the most ancient Bards now extant, we may fairly infer, that the matter contained in them was analogous to the doctrine of those Bards, and that it is the genuine remains of more ancient Bards, who had professed the same religion. I shall make it appear, in the course of the Essay, that such was the real state of the affair.

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* The term *Collection* has offended some minute critics. They ask for the *Book* of Triads, and the name of the author. They might as well ask for the *Book* of adages, and the name of the author. Every Triad is a *whole* in itself; and the ancient copyists transcribed only as many as suited their occasion, or pleased their fancy.

† W. Archaiol. Vol. II. p. 75.

Out of the catalogue of Triads, I shall therefore only strike out about half a dozen, which refer to more recent facts in history, or else betray a tincture of the cloister; and the remainder I shall freely use, when occasion requires, in conjunction with *Taliesin*, *Aneurin*, and *Merddin*, as genuine repositories of British tradition: and to these I shall add some mythological tales, which appear, from internal evidence and correspondent imagery, to have been derived from the same source.

From the general persuasion of the Welsh, and the known state of literature in the country, I had formed an opinion, that no documents, materially differing from those already mentioned, could have an equal claim to authenticity, as Cambro-British tradition: and that the early Bards and the Triads were, in fact, the great sources of information upon this subject.

Other records, however, in some respects irreconcileable with the former, have been pointed out of late years by Mr. *Owen*, the author of the Welsh-English Dictionary, and Mr. *Ed. Williams*, author of two volumes of ingenious poems.

In order to estimate the value of such *novel* claimants as these records, I shall, first all, consider their pretensions, as stated by those writers who have announced them to the Public.

Mr. Owen's edition of Llywarch Hên appeared in the year 1792. The introduction contains a long account of *Bardism,* drawn up by the assistance of Mr. Williams, and from his communications. This account states, that the British constitution of Bardism, or Druidism, having continued in Wales, without interruption, to the dissolution of the Cambro-British government, was, in consequence of that event, in danger of becoming extinct. But that within twenty years after the death of the last Llewelyn, certain members of the order established a *chair,* a kind of *Bardic college,* in Glamorganshire, which has continued to this day. A catalogue is given of the presidents and members of this chair, from *Trahaearn Brydydd Mawr,* the first president, or *founder,* in 1300, down to the present Mr. Ed. Williams.

We are also told, that certain members, in the sixteenth century, *began* to collect the learning, laws, and traditions of the order into books; that these collections were revised and ratified in the seventeenth century; and that they are still received as the fundamental rules of the society.*

From the passages to which I refer, it appears, that Mr. Owen derives his information from Mr. Williams; and the latter from the acts, traditions, and usages of the Chair of Glamorgan, as contained in their *ratified* documents of the *seventeenth century.*

It may fairly be pleaded, that the acts of a society of Bards, which was incorporated within twenty years after the deprivation of the Welsh Princes, the undoubted patrons of Bards and Bardism; and which has continued, without interruption, for five hundred years, must contain many curious and important particulars relative to this ancient and national order of men.

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* See Mr. Owen's Introd. to Ll. Hên. pp. 60, 61, 62.
Mr. Williams's Poems, Vol. II. p. 94.
See also Mr. Turner's *Vindication,* p. 226, and a circumstantial note, communicated by Mr. Owen, p. 227, &c.

But a slight inquiry into the credentials of the society itself, will discover some marks of gross misrepresentation, if not of absolute forgery; and, consequently, suggest the necessity of great caution in admitting its traditions.

1. *Trahaearn Brydydd Mawr* is recorded as having presided in the year 1300;* and several of his successors, between that date and 1370, are also mentioned. But the learned antiquary, Ed. Llwyd, gives the area of the same Trahaearn, An. 1380;† and this from the Red Book of Hergest, a MS. written about the close of the fourteenth century, when the age of our Bard must have been accurately known. He could not, therefore, have presided in the year 1300, nor be succeeded by the persons who are recorded as his successors; and thus the *ratified* account of the establishment of the chair, betrays a combination of fraud and ignorance.

2. But in whatever manner this chair arose, its acts record a schism, which dissolved the union of the order, and occasioned the chair of Glamorgan to separate from that of Carmarthen, in the middle of the fifteenth century.‡ It would therefore become a question, which party preserved

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* Owen's Introd. p. 62.

† Archæol. Brit. p. 264.

‡ See Turner's Vindic. p. 229, &c. and Owen's Introd. p. 60.

the genuine usages of their predecessors; for in such dissentions, the right cause is always pleaded by both sides.

3. The celebrity and respectable support of the chair of Glamorgan, will go but a little way in the assertion of its cause. Such was its obscurity, that the Welsh nation, far from receiving its acts as the genuine tradition of the country, had scarcely any knowledge or tradition of the existence of such a society. The few rustics by whom the members were noticed in their fanatical meetings, *generally supposed them to be infidels, conjurors, and we know not what.**

4. It does not appear, from their own profession, nor from the research of Llwyd, and other antiquaries, that this society possessed a single copy of the works of the ancient Bards, previous to the eighteenth century: and they had not begun writing and digesting their own laws and institutes, till more than two centuries and a half after the pretended æra of their establishment.

The late collection of their acts, which was begun about the year 1560, and repeatedly altered, from that time to the year 1681, together with the avowed obscurity of the society in preceding times, may excite a suspicion, that in all instances, genuine tradition was not within their reach, however fair their pretensions to candour might have been; for *these* were not of the *illustrious line of primitive Bards, wearers of gold chains.*

And a defect of information actually appears, in an instance where we should, least of all, have expected to find it.

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* Ed. Williams' Poems, V. II. p. 161.

Trahaearn is brought forward as the founder of the chair, or the first president; and yet the members have neither *document* nor certain *tradition*, by which they can identify the genuine composition of this father of the society. He is only *supposed to be the same person, who distinguished himself under the assumed name of Casnodyn.**

5. But most of all, the information which Mr. Owen communicates, from the authority of the chair itself, advises some suspension of confidence in the acts of this society.

"In this respect (of religion) the Bards adhered to, or "departed from, their original traditions, only according "to the evidence that might be acquired, from time to time, "in their search after truth."†

And again—"The continuation of the institution did not "depend upon the promulgation of certain articles of faith, "but upon its separate principles of social compact."

This is surely a very compliant system, totally different from the idea which I had formed of the primitive Bards or Druids, as sticklers for inveterate opinions, and superstitious rites. We must not ask the chair of Glamorgan, what were the opinions of the Bards a thousand years ago; but what opinions do they choose to adopt at present?

A pretended *search after truth* leads men into the inextricable mazes of *new philosophy* and *new politics*, as well as of *new religions*, just as they are conducted by the various fancies of their guides, or by their own; and if a society avowedly departs from its original principles, to pursue one new path, I see no reason why it should be incapable of doing the same, to follow another.

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* Owen's Cam. Biog. V. *Trahaearn.*

† Introd. to Ll. Hên. p. 28.

It may be wise for men to despise exploded errors, and addict themselves to a candid search after truth; but if, at the same time that they take this salutary course, they pretend to be the *sole* and *infallible* repositories of *ancient tradition*, *ancient opinions*, and *ancient usages*, they may surely be charged with inconsistency.

For the reasons which I have now stated, I must take the liberty to *search after facts*, rather than adopt, with implicit confidence, the dogmas of this newly-discovered society.

Mr. Williams, whether he styles himself president, or sole surviving member, values himself highly upon his superior collection of Welsh manuscripts. Whatever he has, that can bear the light, I should be glad to see it produced to the Public; and I would cheerfully contribute my mite to facilitate its appearance. But he has no copy of a single British writer, more ancient, or better accredited, than those which I adduce in the course of my inquiry, and which the light, held forth from his chair, has certainly misrepresented.

I therefore appeal, from his whole library, to the authority of documents, which have been known for ages to exist; which are now accessible to every man who understands the language; and which, as I have already shewn, have been regarded as authentically derived from the Druidical school.

In order to ascertain, as nearly as I can, that degree of credit which is due to the ancient Bards, it is part of my plan to confront them with a few historical facts relative to the Druids.

Mr. Williams cannot object to the candour of my proceeding, if, occasionally, I bring the dogmas of his society to the same impartial test. The result I shall submit, without hesitation, to the judgment of the reader.

In the first place, then, it is well known, that amongst the subjects in which the Druids were conversant, the profession of magic made a prominent figure. Dr. Borlase has a whole chapter, well supported with authorities—" Of " their divinations, charms, and incantations;" and another " Of the great resemblance betwixt the Druid and Persian " superstition."* Pliny calls the Druids, the *Magi* of the *Gauls* and *Britons*: † and of our island he says expressly— " Britannia *hodie* eam (sc. Magiam) attonitè celebrat, tantis " cæremoniis, ut eam Persis dedisse videri possit."

Such authorities, together with the general voice of the Bards, as it reached my ear, I regarded as a sufficient justification for having denominated the lots of the Druids *magical lots*. But this, it seems, has given umbrage to the present representative of Taliesin. In an unprovoked attack upon my book, he asks—" Why did Mr. Davies impute *magic* to the British *Bards*, or *Druids?* In the many " thousands of ancient poems still extant, *there is not a* " *syllable that mentions*, or *even alludes to any such thing*."

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* Antiq. of Cornwall, B. II. ch. 21, 22.

† L. 29, c. 1.

This assertion, coming from a man who has, *for many years, been an adept in the mysteries of Bardism; who possesses and has read more Welsh MSS. than any other man in the principality; and has made the works of the Bards his particular study for more than fifty years,* seems to bear hard, not only upon the propriety of my expression, but upon the claim of the Bards themselves to the lore of the Druids. If this assertion be correct, in vain shall the Bards of the twelfth and thirteenth century, *ascribe* to Taliesin; and in vain shall he acknowledge the Druidical character.

But the precipitate use which this writer occasionally makes of his extensive information, emboldens me to examine his accuracy in the present instance.

I find it is a settled maxim with the chair of Glamorgan, that the British Bards were *no conjurors.* In a note upon his Poems,* which were published in the year 1794, the President having stated, upon the authority of *Edmund Prys,* that *Meugant* lived about the close of the fourth century, and was preceptor to the celebrated *Merlin,* subjoins the following information, as from himself:

"There are still extant some poems of *Meugant,* as well "as of his disciple Merlin; and from these pieces, we "clearly perceive that they were neither *prophets* nor *con-* "*jurors,* though said to have been such, by some who were "certainly no great conjurors themselves: they were honest "Welsh Bards, who recorded, in verse, the occurrences "of their own times, never troubling themselves with "futurity."

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* V. II. p. 5.

As to the æras of *Meugant* and *Merlin* (or *Merddin*), it may be observed, that there are no remains of the former, but an elegy upon the death of *Cynddylan*, a Prince of Powys, in the *sixth* century; and another little piece, which mentions *Cadvan*, who died about the year 630.* The only *Merlin*, or *Merddin*, of whom any thing is extant, was *Merddin Wyllt*, the *Caledonian*, who was present at the battle of Arderydd, near the *close of the sixth century*, and survived that event by many years.

And how can these Bards be said *never to have troubled themselves with futurity?* The first of Meugant's poems opens in the high prophetic style —*Dydd dyvydd*—"The day will come;" and speaks of the Druids as true prophets. And, under the name of Merddin, we have scarcely any thing, either genuine or spurious, but descriptions of *magical lots*, *auguries by birds*, and *strings* of *pretended vaticinations*.

So much for the *integrity* of this dictatorial chair. And, if the recollection of the President deserted him, upon a subject so notorious, may we not surmise the possibility of a few passages, which contain some allusion to magic, having escaped his memory.

Before I adduce proofs of the fact here suggested, I must premise, that I do not understand the term *magic*, when applied to the *Druids* and their disciples, as restricted to the profession of *necromancy*, or *conjuring*; but as including the practice of mysterious rites, under pretence of producing extraordinary effects, from natural causes. Such, I apprehend, was the magic of Britain, which Pliny contemplated with astonishment. If, therefore, it be true, that the ancient British Bards neither mentioned nor alluded to magical rites, in this or any other sense, it is an unanswerable objection to the authenticity of their pretensions, as preservers of Druidical lore. But this is by no means the case.

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* W. Archaiol. p. 259, 260.

In the passages which I have extracted, from the Bards of the middle centuries, we have had frequent mention of the *mystical cauldron,* which was viewed as the source of inspiration.

Taliesin acknowledges the same cauldron as the fountain of his genius; and, in a mythological tale, describing the initiation of that Bard, we find the Goddess *Ceridwen* preparing the water of this sacred vase, which contained a decoction of potent herbs, collected with due observation of the *planetary hours.* So efficacious was this medicated water, that no sooner had *three* drops of it touched the lips of the Bard, than all futurity was displayed to his view.*

As I shall have occasion hereafter to introduce this curious tale, I shall not enlarge upon it at present, or upon Taliesin's account of the various ingredients of the cauldron, in the poem called his *Chair.* I only submit to the reader's judgment, that *this is absolute magic,* as understood by the ancients. But lest this should not come up to the idea which has been conceived of the mysterious art, I must endeavour to produce allusions to something that looks more like conjuring.

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* W. Archaiol. p. 17.

This genuine *Bardic* account of the production of the water of *Awen,* or Inspiration, is scarcely reconcileable with the doctrine which Mr. Owen derives from the chair of Glamorgan; namely, that—"The Bardic theology, laws and "principles, have, in all ages, been referred to inspiration, or asserted to be "derived *from heaven,* under the denomination of *Awen.*"

Introd. to Ll. Hên, p. 63.

In the Welsh Archaiology, there is a remarkable song ascribed to Taliesin, which begins thus.

Duw difer nevwy rhag llanw lled ovrwy!
Cyntav attarwy atreis tros vordwy.

Py bren a vo mwy noc ev Daronwy,
Nid vu am noddwy, amgylch balch Nevwy.

Yssid rin y sydd mwy, gwawr gwyr Goronwy,
Odid a'i gwypwy; hudlath Vathonwy,
Ynghoed pan dyvwy frwythau mwy Cymrwy
Ar lan Gwyllionwy: Kynan a'i cafwy
Pryd pan wledychwy.*

"May the heavenly God protect us from a general overflowing! The first surging billow has rolled beyond the sea beach. A greater tree than he, *Taronwy,* there has not been, to afford us a sanctuary, round the proud celestial circle.

"There is a greater secret, the dawn of the men of Goronwy, though known to few—the *magic wand* of Mathonwy, which grows *in the wood,* with more exuberant fruit, on the *bank of the river of spectres:* Kynan shall obtain it at the time when he governs."

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* W. Archaiol. p. 62.

This *wand* surely carries some allusion to the profession of *magic*, an art which is openly avowed in the Incantation of Cynvelyn.*

But lest the accuracy of my translation should be disputed, I shall exhibit a few passages of that remarkable poem, in Mr. Owen's own version.

" Were I to compose the strain—were I to sing—*magic* " *spells* would spring, like those produced by the *circle* and " *wand* of Twrch Trwyth."

" Cynvelyn—the enricher of the *divining magician*, whose " *spell* shall be as powerful as the form of Morien—under " the *thighs of the generous, in equal pace shall run*, the " *sprites* of *the gloom*, skimming along the pleasant hills."

" The superior of the prize-contending songs is the *guar*-" *dian spell* of Cynvelyn, the beloved chief, from whom " blessings flow."

" The guardian *spell* of Cynvelyn—on the plains of Go-" dodin—shall it not prevail over Odin!"†

Such are the poems, in which it has been asserted, " there is not a syllable that mentions *magic*, or even alludes " to any such thing." And such is the candid translation, with which our ingenious lexicographer gratified the curious, only two years before he published his *Llywarch Hên*, and announced the principles of the chair of Glamorgan.

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* W. Archaiol. p. 158.

† Gent. Mag. Nov. 1790.

Thus it appears, that the Druidical profession of the Bards is not discredited by an abhorrence of magic, an art which antiquity positively ascribes to their predecessors, both in Gaul and Britain. Let the recent code make good its own assertions.

That the Druids did use *sortilege*, or divination by lots, which seems to have been a branch of magic, is another historical fact, ascertained by the testimony of Pliny, who says, that they exhibited the *Vervain* in the exercise of that superstitious rite. It may be added, that the use of *tallies*, or *sprigs*, cut from a fruit-bearing tree, which Tacitus ascribes to the Germans, was probably common to them with the Druids, because we still find allusions to the same subject in the British Bards.*

In my late volume, I stated what appeared to me the genuine tradition of the Britons, relative to these lots; and with them I connected the *letters*, which are called *Coelbreni*, *Omensticks*, *Lots*, or *Tallies*. †

My opinion, I thought, was innocent at least; but it produced from Mr. Williams a severe philippic, together with an exposition of some curious mythology, upon the origin of letters and language, which is not to be found in any ancient British writer. This was put into the hands of my best friends: but I shall not take farther notice of *manuscript* or *oral* criticism. I only wish the author to publish it; when I see it in print, my answer shall be ready.

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* See Sect. V.

† Celt. Res. p. 245, &c.

I now go on to consider the character of the ancient Bards, as natural philosophers. With what success the Druids, their avowed preceptors, cultivated the study of nature, and what system of physiology they taught to their disciples, may be matter of curious inquiry, which I must leave to others. But as to the fact, that they addicted themselves to studies of this kind, we have many express testimonies in the ancients. I select the following.

* "Ea divinationum ratio, ne, in barbaris quidem gen-
"dem gentibus neglecta est: siquidem, et in Galliâ, Dru-
"ides sunt, e quibus ipse *Divitiacum Aeduum*, hospitem
"tuum laudatoremque, cognovi: qui et *naturæ rationem*,
"quam *physiologiam* Græci appellant, *notam esse sibi pro-*
"*fitetur*, et, partim auguriis, partim conjecturâ, quæ essent
"futura dicebat." †

Upon this passage I would remark, that Cicero does not speak from vague report: he declares the profession of a man who was personally known to him, who had been his guest, and with whom he had familiarly conversed. He also gives unequivocal testimony, that Divitiacus Aeduus was a Druid, and well versed in the various studies of his order.

It must be recollected, that this same Prince of the Aedui was the intimate friend and companion of Cæsar, and that he enjoyed the confidence of that great man, at the very time he drew up his valuable account of the Druids. It is more than barely probable, that this account was collected from the actual communications of Divitiacus; for it is immediately subjoined to the relation of his embassy to the senate of Rome, and the acknowledgment of the pre-eminent rank of his countrymen, the Aedui. From hence I would infer, that Cæsar had procured the most accurate information upon the subject of the Druids, and consequently, that every circumstance in his memorial has a claim to the highest respect.

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* "This method of divination has not been neglected even amongst barba-
"rous nations. For there are Druids in Gaul, with one of whom I was ac-
"quainted, namely, Divitiacus Aeduus, who enjoyed the hospitality of your
"house, and spoke of you with admiration. This man not only professed an
"intimate knowledge of the system of nature, which the Greeks call *Physiology*,
"but also foretold future events, partly by augury, and partly by conjecture."

† Cic. de Divinatione, L. I.

This competent historian, therefore, having stated the *tradition*, that the discipline of these ancient priests had been first established in Britain; and the *fact*, that at the time when he wrote, those who wished to be more accurately instructed in the Druid lore, generally went into Britain for their education; proceeds to specify, amongst the topics of their study—* Multa præterea—de rerum naturâ—disputant—et juventuti tradunt. †.

We have, then, abundant authority to assert, that the Druids aspired to the character of natural philosophers: and it would be reasonable to demand of the Bards, their professed disciples, some pretensions of the same kind.

The poems of Taliesin furnish several passages, which may be classed under this head. Of these, the following *cosmography* may be given as a curious specimen.

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* They also dispute largely upon subjects of natural philosophy, and instruct the youth in their principles.

† De Bell. Gall. L. VI. c. 14.

Os ywch brîv veirddion
Cyrwyv celvyddon,
Traethwch orchuddion
O'r Mundi maon—

Ymae pryv atgas,
O gaer Satanas,
A oresgynas
Rhwng dwvn a bâs.
Cyvled yw ei enau
A mynydd Mynnau:
Nys gorvydd angau
Na llaw na llavnau.
Mae llwyth naw can·maen
Yn rhawn dwy bawen:
Un llygad yn ei ben
Gwyrdd val glâs ïäen.

Tair fynawn y sydd
Yn ei wegorlydd;
Mor vryched arnaw
A noviant trwyddaw
Bu laith bualawn
Deivr ddonwy dyvr ddawn.

Henwau'r tair fynawn
O ganol eigiawn:
Un llwydd heli
Pan vo yn corini
I edryd lliant
Dros moroedd divant.

Yr ail yn ddinam
A ddygwydd arnam

Pan vo'r glaw allan
Drwy awyr ddylan.
Y drydedd a ddawedd
Trwy wythi mynyddedd
Val callestig wledd
O waith rex rexedd.*

" If ye are primitive Bards,
" According to the discipline of qualified instructors,
" Relate the great secrets
" Of the world which we inhabit.—

" There is a formidable animal,
" From the city of Satan,
" Which has made an inroad
" Between the deep and the shallows.
" His mouth is as wide
" As the mountain of Mynnau:
" Neither death can vanquish him,
" Nor hand, nor swords.
" There is a load of nine hundred rocks
" Between his two paws:
" There is one eye in his head,
" Vivid as the blue ice.

" Three fountains there are,
" In his receptacles;
" So thick about him,
" And flowing through him,
" Have been the moistening horns
" Of *Deivr Donwy*, the giver of waters.

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* W. Archaiol. p. 20.

"The names of the three fountains, *that spring*
"*From the middle of the deep.*—

"One is the increase of salt water,
"When it mounts aloft,
"Over the fluctuating seas,
"To replenish the streams.

"The second is that which, innocently,
"Descends upon us,
"When it rains without,
"Through the boundless atmosphere.

"The third is that which springs
"Through the veins of the mountains,
"As a banquet from the flinty rock,
"Furnished by the King of Kings."

Though the Bard has introduced the foreign terms, *Satanas, Mundi,* and *Rex,* yet it is evident, that he intends the doctrine contained in this passage, as a select piece of Druidical lore: hence he proposes the question, as a touchstone, to prove the qualifications of those who professed themselves *instructors* in primitive Bardism.

The Druids, therefore, represented the visible world, not as formed by the word of a wise and beneficent Creator, but as an enormous animal, ascending out of the abyss, and from the abode of an *evil principle.* The same subject is touched upon in another passage, where we discover, that the British name of this evil principle was *Gwarthawn.*

Yssid teir fynawn
Ym mynydd Fuawn:

Yssid Gaer Gwarthawn
A dan don eigiawn.*

" There are three fountains
" In the mountain of *Fuawn:*
" The city of Gwarthawn
" Is beneath the wave of the deep."

I might have compared another passage with the above, had it not been for the want of curiosity in the transcribers of our old manuscripts. Mr. Morris has consigned great part of an ancient poem to oblivion, because " it contained " an odd sort of philosophy, about the origin of salt water, " rain, and springs." †

The absurd and monstrous idea of the formation of the world, which we have been now considering, is certainly from the very lowest school of heathenism. It is utterly irreconcilable with Mr. Williams's *new British Mythology,* and with his story of *Enigat the Great;* though not much dissimilar to the genuine doctrine of his chair, exhibited at the conclusion of his poetical works.

The reader may not be displeased with a few more *Questiones Druidicæ,* as proposed by the same Taliesin. The Bard has not, indeed, added the solutions of his problems, but they may serve to point out the subjects of his study, and his ambition to be esteemed a general physiologist.

In a poem, which is called *Mabgyvreu,* or *Elements of Instruction,* he demands of his disciple—

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* W. Archaiol. p. 32.

† Ibid. p. 47.

Py dadwrith mwg;
Pyd echenis mwg?

"What is it which decomposes smoke;
"And from what element does smoke arise?"

Py fynawn a ddiwg,
Uch argel tywyllwg,
Pan yw calav can,
Pan yw nôs lloergan?

"What fountain is that, which bursts forth,
"Over the covert of darkness,
"When the reed is white,
"And the night is illuminated by the moon?"

A wyddosti beth wyd
Pan vyth yn cysgwyd:
Ai corph ai enaid,
Ai argel cannwyd?

"Knowest thou what thou art,
"In the hour of sleep—
"A mere body—a mere soul—
"Or a secret retreat of light?"

Eilewydd celvydd,
Py'r na'm dyweid?
A wyddosti cwdd vydd
Nos yn aros dydd?
A wyddosti arwydd
Pet deilen y sydd?
Py drychevis mynydd
Cyn rhewiniaw elvydd?

Py gynneil magwyr
Daear yn breswyl.
Enaid pwy gwynawr
Pwy gwelas ev—Pwy gwyr?

" O skilful son of harmony,
" Why wilt thou not answer me?
" Knowest thou where the night awaits
" For the passing of the day?
" Knowest thou the token (mark or character)
" Of every leaf which grows?
" What is it which heaves up the mountain
" Before the convulsion of elements?
" Or what supports the fabric
" Of the habitable earth?
" Who is the illuminator of the soul—
" Who has seen--who knows him!"

The following seems to be a reflection upon the teachers of another system.

Rhyveddav yn llyvrau
Na wyddant yn ddiau
Enaid pwy ei hadnau;
Pwy bryd ei haelodau:
Py barth pan ddinau;
Py wynt a py frau.

" I marvel that, in their books,
" They know not, with certainty,
" What are the properties of the soul:
" Of what form are its members:
" In what part, and when, it takes up its abode;
" By what wind, or what stream it is supplied."

In the *Angar Cyvyndawd,* of which I have inserted the beginning in the Celtic Researches, we have several questions of the same kind proposed; as,

" At what time, and to what extent, will land be pro-
" ductive?"—" What is the extent and diameter of the
" earth?"—Who is the Regulator, between heaven and
" earth?" — " What brings forth the clear gem (glain)
" from the working of stones?"—" Where do the cuckoos,
" which visit us in the summer, retire during the winter?"

" From the deep I bring forth the strain—let a river be
" specified—I know its qualities when it ebbs or flows,
" swells or subsides."

" I know what foundations there are beneath the sea: I
" mark their counterparts, each in its *sloping plane."*—
Osgor.

" Who carried the measuring line of the Lord of causes
" —what scale was used, when the heavens were reared
" aloft; and who supported the curtain, from the earth to
" the skies?"

Of these, and a multitude of similar questions, Taliesin professes, that he could teach the true solution. In his own opinion, therefore, he was as great a physiologist as *Divitiacus Aeduus,* or any other Druid of the hallowed grove.

Amongst the studies of the Druids, Cæsar enumerates astronomy and geography; but the remaining works of the Bards scarcely afford us an opportunity of judging, as to their proficiency in these sciences.

If the poem called *Canu y byd mawr*, "The great song "of the world," contains any thing of Druidism, we must acknowledge at least, that it is mixed with a large proportion of foreign matter.

The subject is *man and the universe.*—The soul is said to be seated in the head of man, who is composed of *seven* elements, *Fire, Earth, Water, Air, Vapour, Blossom* (the fructifying principle), and the *wind of purposes* (q. whether the *soul* or the *passions?)* He is endowed with *seven* senses, *appetite* and *aversion* being admitted into the number.—Hence, perhaps, the vulgar phrase, of being frightened out of one's *seven senses.* There are seven *skies* or *spheres* over the head of the diviner.

There are three divisions of the sea, answering to the like number of shores.

Thus far, for aught I know, the Bard may have drawn from the source of Druidism; but he proceeds to reckon up the seven planets, by names which are borrowed or corrupted from the Latin—*Sola, Luna, Marca, Marcarucia, Venus,* SEVERUS, *Saturnus.*

Of the *five* zones of the earth, two are cold, one is hot and uninhabited, the fourth contains the *inhabitants of pa-*

radise, and the fifth is the dwelling-place of mortals, divided into three parts, *Asia*, *Africa*, and *Europe*.*

In the *little song of the world*, the Bard brings forward a national system, differing from that which was taught by the *Bards of the world*, or *the instructors of other nations*. This little piece deserves attention. It is not mythological, but philosophical, and seems, in some respects, to correspond with the system of Pythagoras, who had many ideas in common with the Druids, and is expressly recorded to have studied in the Gaulish school.

Kein geneis canav
Byd undydd mwyav:
Lliaws a bwyllav
Ac a bryderav.
Cyvarchav veirdd byd—
Pryd na'm dyweid!
Py gynheil y byd
Na seirth yn eissywyd:
Neu'r byd pei syrthiei
Py âr yd gwyddei?
Pwy a'i gogynhaliei?
Byd mor yw advant!
Pan syrth yn divant
Etwa yn geugant.
Byd mor yw rhyvedd
Na syrth yn unwedd.
Byd mor yw odid
Mor vawr yd sethrid.

" Though I have sung already, I will sing of the world

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* W. Archaiol. p. 25.

" one day more: much will I reason and meditate. I will
" demand of the Bards of the world—why will they not
" answer me! What upholds the world, that it falls not,
" destitute of support: or, if it were to fall, which way
" would it go? Who would sustain it? How great a wanderer is the world! Whilst it glides on, without resting,
" it is still within its *hollow orbit*. How wonderful its
" frame, that it does *not fall off in one direction!* How
" strange, that it is not disturbed by the multitude of
" tramplings!"

Some idle Rhymer has added to the conclusion, that *the four evangelists support the world, through the grace of the spirit:* but Giraldus Cambrensis complains, that in his age the simple works of the Bards had been disfigured by such modern and ill-placed flourishes.

* * *

I have now endeavoured to catch a glimpse of our early Bards as natural philosophers, and have shewn, that they were not less ambitious of the character, than their venerated preceptors, the Druids, are recorded to have been.

Hence I proceed to contemplate the same Bards, and their instructors, in a political light. Through this maze of inquiry, the chair of Glamorgan kindly offers its torch of direction. One of the leading maxims of its *Druidical* code, as announced to the Public, is a political principle, frequently touched upon, both by Mr. Williams and Mr. Owen, but more fully detailed by the latter.

" Superiority of individual power is what none, but

" God, can possibly be entitled to; for the power that gave
" existence to all, is the only power that has a claim of
" right to rule over all. A man cannot assume authority
" over another; for if he may over one, by the same reason he may rule over a million, or over a world. All men
" are necessarily equal; the four elements, in their natural
" state, or every thing not manufactured by art, is the
" *common property* of all." *

The merit of the doctrine which is here held forth, it is not my province duly to appreciate. I have nothing to do with it, any farther than as it purports to be a principle drawn from the source of Druidism, through the channel of the British Bards.

At the time when this book first appeared, I was not absolutely a novice in the remaining accounts of the Druids, or in the works of the British Bards; yet I must own, that all this was perfectly new to me. I am now, upon farther acquaintance with the works of our Cambrian progenitors, fully convinced, *that they never taught any such thing*.

I would therefore advise the partizans of the oracular chair, to reconsider this code of laws, and search, whether this doctrine is to be found in the first copy, which was compiled in the *sixteenth* century, or only in *that copy*, which was *revised, rectified,* and *ratified* during the *great rebellion* in the middle of the seventeenth. And if it be found only in the latter, I would ask, was not Druidism, *as far as this goes*, very popular amongst Britons and Saxons in the age of Cromwell?—Perhaps I wrong that age.

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* Introd. to Ll. Hên. p. 54.

The principles here announced, seem to go rather beyond the levellers of the seventeenth century, and to savour strongly of a *Druidism* which originated in *Gaul,* and was from thence transplanted into some corners of Britain, not many ages before the year 1792, when the *memorial of Bardism* made its appearance. It were well, if the sages who prepared that memorial, would revise their extracts, and recal any *accidental inaccuracy,* that might otherwise mislead future antiquaries. They must know, as *well as I do, that this is not the Druidism of history, nor of the British Bards,*

Let us hear Cæsar's testimony. The Druids of Gaul, with whom he was intimately acquainted, were *supreme judges* in all causes, public and private. Every thing bent to their decree. The sacred order, therefore, possessed a *pre-eminence of authority* over the people, whom they did not acknowledge as their *necessary* equals. Nor were the Druids upon a *level* amongst themselves; for we are farther told—* "His omnibus Druidibus *præest unus, qui summam* "*inter eos habet auctoritatem,*"

Nor did they deem it unlawful for even temporal princes to enjoy pre-eminence of power. Divitiacus, an accredited Druid, complains of the ingratitude of his brother, Dumnorix, who had been advanced to *great authority* by the exertion of his influence,

But as the Druids and the princes were generally relations, it may be argued, that they connived at a trifling dereliction of principle in their own families, and contented themselves with moulding the people into a state of perfect equality: which they might have done, had they been so disposed; as the whole community of the nation was formed under their control.

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* "Over all these Druids, there is one president, who enjoys supreme authority amongst them."

Here, then, if any where, we may expect to discover the operation of the great *levelling scheme.* But here we are farther from the point than ever.—[*] "Plebes pœnè "servorum habetur loco, quæ, per se, *nihil audet,* et *nullo* "*adhibetur concilio.* Plerique cum, aut ære alieno, aut "magnitudine tributorum, aut injuriâ potentium premun"tur, sese in servitutem dicant nobilibus. In hos eadem "omnia sunt jura, quæ dominis in servos." [†]

When the Romans came into Britain, where Druidism had also an establishment, they found the insular tribes subject to their respective princes, who had authority, not only to govern during their lives, but also to bequeath their dominions.

It is therefore evident, that individual authority and private property were countenanced under the auspices of Druidism. But was this the case in the times of those Bards, who still exist in their works, and to whom the levelling system has been imputed? Let us ask Taliesin, "whose poems (according to Mr. Williams) exhibit a com"plete system of Druidism." [‡]

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[*] "The common people are regarded as nearly upon a level with slaves. "They have no power of their own, and are never admitted into the assemblies "of the states. Many of these, when oppressed by debt, by the weight of "taxes, or by the injury of the great, devote themselves to the service of the "nobles, who have, in all respects, the same power over them, which masters "have over their slaves."

[†] De Bell. Gall. L. VI. c. 13.

[‡] Poems, V. II. p. 7.

This venerable Bard thus speaks of the Prince of Reged.*

" There is superior happiness for the illustrious in fame;
" for the liberal in praise—there is superior glory, that
" Urien and his children exist, and that *he reigns supreme,*
" *the sovereign Lord.*" †

But why should I select quotations? Who, amongst the ancient Bards, was not patronized by princes, whom he has celebrated, not less for the greatness of their power, than for the eminence of their virtues? If either historical authority, or the testimony of the Bards, can have any weight in deciding this question, this curious dogma of the pretended *chair* has nothing at all to do with *Druidism* or *Bardism*. That it is not even countenanced by the ancient Bards, must be known to every man who is conversant in their works.

It therefore rests with the advocates of this *chair,* to inform us, whether it was introduced into their code by the levellers of the seventeenth century, or *fabricated* during the late anarchy of France, as a new engine, fit for immediate execution.

I am far from professing myself the general advocate of the Bards, or the Druids; I only wish to exhibit them in their true colours; but I find it impossible to write upon this subject, without vindicating their character from an imputation, *as groundless as it is infamous.*

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* W. Archaiol. p. 31.

† Mr. Turner's Translation. *Vindic.* p. 187.

Another particular in the traditions of the dictatorial chair, which does not perfectly correspond with the testimony of the ancients relative to the Druids, or with the sentiments and practice of the Bards, is that inviolable attachment to peace, which is ascribed to the whole order.

" It is necessary to remark (says Mr. Owen), that Lly-
" warch was not a member of the regular *order* of Bards,
" for the whole tenor of his life militated against the lead-
" ing maxims of that system; the groundwork of which
" was, *universal peace,* and *perfect equality.* For a Bard
" was not to bear arms, nor even *to espouse a cause* by any
" other active means; neither was a naked weapon to be
" held in his presence; he being deemed the sacred cha-
" racter of a herald of peace. And in any of these cases,
" where the rules were transgressed, whether by his own
" will, or by the act of another, against him, he was de-
" graded, and no longer deemed one of the order,"*

Here again I suspect, that the president of the chair has not been quite accurate in his notes. I do not recollect to have seen this doctrine, in its full extent, promulgated by any code, before a certain period of the French Revolution, when the meek republicans of Gaul, and their modest partizans in other countries, joined the *indefeasible right of equality* with the *inviolable duty of peace,* and impressed them upon the orderly subjects of every state; whilst they themselves were preparing for every species of injury to civil society. But whencesoever this fallacious principle took its rise, it certainly did not belong to the *Druids,* or to the *Bards,* without great limitation.

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* Introd. to Ll. Hên. p. 18. See also p. 25.

That the former were friends of peace, and seldom engaged in war, is a point which must be admitted. But there were occasions, upon which even the Druids deemed war lawful, and encouraged their disciples to contemn death, and act bravely in the field. Cæsar observes, that an immunity from military service, was amongst the privileges of the Druids; and that it was their *general* custom to keep aloof from the field of battle. But was this custom grafted upon an inviolable principle? Let us hear. Having mentioned the supreme authority of the Arch-Druid, the historian adds this information. * " Hoc mortuo, si qui ex " reliquis excellit dignitate, succedit. At si sint plures " pares, suffragio Druidum adlegitur: nonnunquam etiam " *armis de principatu contendunt.*"

In these cases, what becomes of their perfect equality? and, in *the latter case*, of their unconquerable abhorrence of war? Was the whole body of Druids degraded, in consequence of having *espoused a cause*, and that by the sentence of the president, who owed his elevation to the number and zeal of his party, and to the length of his sword?

If we turn our attention to the British order, we shall find them in the same predicament with their brethren in Gaul. The Druids, who opposed Suetonius on the shores of Mona, and terrified his soldiers with their direful imprecations, not only endured the sight of naked weapons, but vigorously espoused a cause; and it was the same cause for which, as we are told, the venerable Llywarch is to be degraded; namely, *the defence of the country against foreign invaders.*

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* "Upon his death, if any one of the survivors excels the rest in dignity, he " succeeds; but if several have equal pretensions, the president is chosen by " the votes of the Druids. Sometimes, however, the supreme dignity is dis" puted by force of arms."

When we descend to those British Bards, who professed themselves disciples of the Druids, we find a caveat entered against the aged prince above named. He is not to be acknowledged by the order, because he made a noble stand in defence of his patrimony. But what are we to do with *Merddin* and *Aneurin?* The former fought manfully in the battle of Arderydd, and the latter saw a multitude of *blood-stained weapons in the fatal day of Cattraeth.*

Even Taliesin, with his "Complete System of Druidism," was a decided partizan in the cause of the gallant Urien. He celebrated his victories, and encouraged his military ardour. So far was he from abhorring the sight of a naked sword, when he considered it as *justly drawn,* that he could deliberately contemplate, and minutely record, the circumstances of the destructive conflict.

Of this, I shall produce a pretty convincing proof in Mr. Owen's own translation, with which he favoured the public only two years before the appearance of his Llywarch Hên.

"I saw the fierce contending tumult; where wild de-
"struction raged, and swift flowing streams of blood ran,
"amidst the half surviving ranks—I saw men, whose path
"was desolation, with their garments entangled with clot-
"ted gore: quick and furious were their thrusts in the
"long maintained conflict; the rear of the battle had no
"room to fly, when the chief of Reged urged on the pur-
"suit.—I am astonished at his daringness," &c.

And with what sentiment does the Bard conclude his song, after having witnessed this dreadful spectacle? He recommends the pursuit of military glory, even to *a lady*, and declares his resolution to praise the magnanimous Urien.

" Mayst thou pant for conflict, O Euronwy! And till I
" fail with age, and through cruel fate must die, may I not
" smile with joy, if I sing not the praise of Urien!" *

If Cynvelyn's Incantation does not rather belong to Aneurin, the same Bard justifies the destruction of the foe; nor does he think his hand polluted, either with the cup or the spear, that carries the mark of slaughter.

" Fury, in a torrent, shall flow against the Angles.—
" Slaughter is just! The raven's due is our heaps of slain!
" Before the man who is naturally endowed with song,
" light unfolds the mystery—and, bearing woe, he shall
" return, his glittering yellow cup, besmeared with gore,
" hiding the froth of the yellow mead. Satiated with en-
" terprise, his heavy spear, with gold adorned, he bestowed
" on me. Be it for a benefit to his soul!" †

Such is the genuine language of the Bards; and, agreeable to this language, is the decision of the learned and candid historian, who has done us the honour of vindicating their cause.

" These Bards were *warriors.* Their songs commemo-

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* Taliesin's Battle of Gwenystrad. Gent. Mag. March, 1790.

† Gent. Mag. Nov. 1795. Mr. Owen's translation.

" rate *warriors;* and their feelings and sentiments are wholly
" martial."*

But is it true, that an abhorrence of weapons, and an inviolate attachment to peace, were established principles, even in the chair of Glamorgan? There are circumstances which seem to imply the contrary.

According to Mr. Owen's list, David ab Gwilym presided in the year 1360.† In a foolish quarrel with Gruffudd Grŷg, this Bard challenges his adversary to decide their dispute with the sword. Gruffudd accepts the challenge, and bids him defiance. Then, indeed, but not till then, the worthy president manifests a disposition for peace.‡

If the Bards, according to the code of this chair, were never to espouse even a just cause, what becomes of the " Necessary, but reluctant duty of the Bards of the island " of Britain, to unsheath the sword against the lawless and " depredatory?"§

Or how can the chair reconcile this inviolate principle, with its own practice, of *bringing the assault of warfare against a degraded member, unsheathing the sword, calling to him three times, and proclaiming, that the sword was naked*

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* Mr. Turner's *Vindic.* p. 207.

† Introd. to Ll. Hên. p. 62.

‡ See D. ab Gwilym's Works, p. 244, &c.

§ This duty is acknowledged by the *institutional* Triads of that very chair.—Williams's Poems, V. II. p. 232.

against him? *—Surely this manifests a disposition as hostile, as can well be tolerated by the present laws of society.

* * *

The few observations upon the novel maxims, and dictatorial tone, of the chair of Glamorgan, which the principle of self-defence have extorted from me, may supply a useful hint to future inquirers into Welsh antiquities. It is not, however, my aim, to pass a general censure upon the traditions of that society. I am willing to suppose, that they would reflect light upon many subjects which are now obscure, were they brought forward, unmixed with modern speculation.

That the particulars here selected, have neither support nor countenance amongst the ancient Bards, or their preceptors, the Druids, I have already shewn. It remains for me to inquire, whether they correspond with the personal character and sentiments of *Trahaearn Brydydd Mawr,* who is announced as the first president; and consequently, whether it is probable, that he established a society upon such principles.

Under the name of this *bold* and *turbulent* genius, we have only two pieces preserved: but they are highly characteristical, and furnish us with some important anecdotes.

Trahaearn appears to have been a free guest in the mansion of *Howel* of *Llan Dingad,* in the vale of Towy, about a hundred years after Wales had finally submitted to the English government. Howel's peace establishment, as described by the muse of his Bard, was much in the style of *Sir Patrick Rackrent;* and, in his heroical capacity, he made some local efforts to assert the independence of his country, in an age when such patriotism could be *no longer a virtue.*

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* Introd. to Ll: Hên. p. 51.

This gentleman's Bard made a Christmas visit to *Cadwgan,* vicar of *Llan Gynog,* where, it seems, he met with a scanty and very homely entertainment. His resentment dictated a furious lampoon upon the vicar, his *daughter* and his *son-in-law;* in which he declared, that "if the house "were burnt upon the eve of the new year, it would be a "good riddance; and any shabby wretch might perform a "meritorious act, by killing the alien son-in-law with the "sword."

Such an outrage might have been treated with merited contempt, had not the vicar's house been *actually burnt,* and his son-in-law killed upon that very new-year's eve.

This, I presume, was the *notorious* circumstance which marked the æra of our Bard in the year 1380. Whether *Trahaearn* himself was, or was not, personally engaged in this atrocious act, does not appear: but his efforts to clear himself in the subsequent poem, prove, at least, the existence of suspicion.

In just abhorrence of his conduct, the *incendiary* and *assassin* was disowned by the family of Llan Dingad, and became a necessitous wanderer for a long period. During this season of disgrace, if ever, he presided in the chair of Glamorgan.

In the following poem, we find him labouring to effect a reconciliation with the *grandsons* of his patron; but with what success, is unknown at present. The reader will pardon my giving a translation of the whole piece, as it constitutes no unfavourable specimen of the Bardism of the fourteenth century.

SUNG, by *Trahaearn the great poet*, in praise of Howel of Llan Dingad, in the vale of Towy, 1350.*

1.†

A dauntless leader in the conflict, the very energy of heroism, was the valiant Howel; eminently severe in the work of violence; proud and bright as a dragon, directing the death of the foe: and this dragon, I know, will be illustrious in the memorials of his country.

2.

A dismal carnage was seen amongst the people, when the daring hawk gave battle. In equal pace rushed the cataracts of blood, and the incessant spears, during the shock. Woe's my heart, that I remained silent for a single night!

3.

Wider and wider did the groans of nature extend, when the vessel of racking poison poured the pangs of destiny,* whilst he was encouraging his host to protect the vale of Towy, a place which is now desolate, without a chief. To be silent henceforth, is not the act of manhood.

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* W. Archaiol. p. 499. The editors have probably inserted 1350, by way of accommodation with the chronology of the *chair*. The only copy to which they refer, as their original, has the date 1380, which came from the authority of Dr. Davies of Mallwyd, and is the same which is given by Ed. Llwyd, in his Archœologia.

† The places mentioned in this poem, are in the neighbourhood of *Llandovery*. *Llandingad* is the parish in which that town is situated. The manor of *Hirvryn* comprehends part of that parish. *Caew*, or *Cynvil Gaio*, is at the distance of about ten miles, on the *Llanbedr* road; and *Myddvai*, which joins the parish of Llandingad, was famous for its succession of physicians, in the family of *Rhiwallawn*, from the 13th to the 18th century.

4.

For the Lion, of shivered spears; for the shield of bravery, there is now crying and lamentation, because our hope is removed—the chief with the huge clarions, whose whelming course was like the raging sea. The afflicted host of Lloegr † did he consume in his descent, like the tumultuous flame in the mountain heath. ‡

5.

Though fierce in his valour, like *Lleon*, with a violent, irresistible assault, he vaulted into battle, to plunder the King of Bernicia; § yet the hero of the race of Twedor, the ravager of thrice seven dominions, was a placid and liberal-handed chief, when he entertained the Bards at his magnificent table.

6.

With the rage of Ocean, he raised aloft the shield of the three provinces. His hand was upon the sword, spotted with crimson, and the scabbard adorned with gold. Then had the severe Lion uninterrupted success, in the deadly battle of *Caew:* the area was filled with terror, and the buildings reduced to ashes, as with the wrath of *Llŷr Llediaith*, and the conduct of *Cai*.*

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* It appears by this passage, that poison had been administered to the warrior, just as he was going to battle.

† England.

‡ It is the custom in many parts of Wales, to burn the heaths upon the mountains, in order to clear the turf, which is pared off, for fuel.

§ Some nobleman, who took his title from a place in the North, or within the limits of ancient Bernicia.

7.

But the drugs of *Myddvai* caused the mead banquets to cease within those gates, where energy was cherished by the assiduous friend of Genius, the ruler of battle, the benefactor of strangers, in his ever-open hall—so that now he lives no more—the leader of spearmen, of illustrious race, the arbiter of all the South.

8.

A thousand strains of praise are preparing, as a viaticum, for this gem of heroes, this mighty eagle, by my golden muse: a prudent, a fortunate, an irresistible chief was he, in the tumults of his principality: his spear dispossessed the aliens; for he was the foe of slavery.

9.

To him be awarded, by the righteous Judge, the patrimony of paradise, in the land of the blessed—a portion which has been prepared (and the only portion which violence cannot remove) by the favour of HIM, who presides over the pure, and the perfect in faith!

10.

And may the God who beholds secrets, the supreme supporter of princes, and the all-knowing Son of Mary, cause, by his pure good will, by the visible and speedy endowment of his sincere favour, that Howel's chief Bard, after his being long disowned,

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* Heroes of ancient fable, who will be mentioned again in the course of this Essay.

11.

May remain with his generous grandsons, the objects of the wanderer's vows! Though dreadful in battle, was the blade of Einion the judge? yet was he a golden president in his district, an entertainer of the Muses, in the great sanctuary of the children of panegyric—the supporter of thousands.

12.

I will not dissemble. As it is my privilege to judge, I will declare my sentiment, that no *wayward lampoon shall sport with the great renown of the hero*; and, *that I shall not be found in the company, or in the form of an outlaw,* or *without a pledge of inviolable faith towards the clergy.*

13.

I am blameless, and entitled to the peace of the plough, the general and free boon of the warrior, according to the established and sincere decree of the great, unerring Father, the love-diffusing Lord, the *supreme* dispenser of light.

14.

I will relate (and the tribute of love will I send forth) a golden tale, a canon of the natural delineation of the muse for my tribe: and this with joy will I do, to prevent the colouring of falsehood, till the spring of my genius be gone, with the messenger that calls me hence.

15.

For want of the discretion to compose *good words,* I have lost the incessant invitation to the cauldrons, and the munificent banquets of the land of eloquence, and generous horns of delicious liquor, amongst the mighty pillars of battle, whose hands brandish the glittering sword.

16.

Wretched is he, whose lot it has been to lose the mead and the wine, that flow to the frequenters of those halls, which are liberal to every claimant; and the frank invitations, and the presents, of those Dragon chiefs, who pour forth thy precious showers, *O vale of Towy!*

17.

Every night is my grief renewed with the thought, that by the *violence of one rash transgression, I have forfeited the valuable privilege,* and lost the protecting power of the supporter of the splendid host, the hero, of the seed of Mervin.—Of his sparkling wine, and his scarlet, I partake no more!

18.

Yet still, with due and lasting praise, shall be celebrated the munificent shower of the hawks of *Hirvryn,* the last of that warlike race, which derives its blood from the line of the slaughterer; and my eagle, the leader of the embattled spearmen, of the district of *Dingad.*

He who peruses this poem, must be immediately convinced, that the feelings and sentiments of Trahaearn are utterly irreconcileable with the principles, which he is represented as having taught. The Bard is neither shocked at the exertion of military spirit, nor backward in espousing the cause of his country and his patron, as well as of his own appetite. And here is not a syllable that countenances the doctrine of *perfect equality.*

As I shall have occasion to mention the *nocturnal mysteries* of the Bards, I must just take notice of another dogma of the boasted chair, which asserts, *that the Bards did every thing in the eye of the light, and in the face of the sun;* and, *that none of their meetings could be holden, but in a conspicuous place, whilst the sun was above the horizon.*[*]

As this unqualified publicity is referred to the principles and practice of the Druids, it must stagger the confidence of those who have been accustomed to contemplate the awful secrets of the grove, and the veil of mystery which was thrown over the whole institution.

The annual, or quarterly sessions of the Druids, where they sat, [†] *in loco consecrato,* to hear and decide causes, may have been held in a *conspicuous* place, and by day: and thus much may be inferred, from their *mounts of assembly;* but what regarded their internal discipline, and the mysteries of their religion, was certainly conducted with greater privacy.

" [‡] Docent multa, nobilissimos gentis," says P. Mela, " [§] *clam,* et *diu,* vicenis annis, in *specu,* aut in *abditis* " *saltibus.* [||] And their effectual regard to secrecy, is forcibly pointed out, by what the author immediately adds

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[*] See Owen's Introd. to Ll. Hên, p. 27, 48. Also, Williams's Poems, V. II. p. 39, *note,* and p. 216.

[†] In a consecrated place.

[‡] " They give lessons upon a variety of subjects, to the first nobility of the ' nation."

[§] " These lessons are private, and continued for a long time—for the space " of twenty years, in a cave, or amongst inaccessible forests."

[||] Lib. III. c. 2.

—"[*] UNUM ex iis, quæ præcipiunt, in *vulgus effluxit.*"—The attentive ear of curiosity had been able to catch but *one* of their institutional Triads.

Cæsar also mentions the solicitude of the Druids, lest their discipline should be exposed to public view: and their religious meetings, though covered by the inaccessible grove, were holden in the night, as well as at noon.

"[†] Medio cum Phœbus in axe est,
Aut Cœlum nox atra tenet."[‡]

With all this, the celebration of the nightly mysteries, described in the *chair of Taliesin,* his *Ogov Gorddewin,* Cave, or *Specus* of the *Arch-Diviner,* the *torches* of *Ceridwen,* which flamed at *midnight,* and at the *dawn,* together with *Merddin's concealment* in the *Caledonian* forest, perfectly accord.

I shall close my preliminary section, when I have brought the Bards into one more point of comparison with their venerable instructors, the Druids.

This ancient order of men does not recommend itself to our notice, merely as teachers of a false philosophy, or presidents of a gloomy superstition.

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[*] *One* of the maxims which they teach, has found its way to the Public.

[†] "When the sun is in the middle of his course, or when the dark night "covers the sky."

[‡] Lucan. Pharsal. Lib. III.

"The Druids were remarkable for justice, moral and "religious doctrines, and skill in the laws of their country: "for which reason, all disputes were referred to their arbi"tration: and their decision, whether relating to private "and domestic, or public and civil affairs, was final." *

Mela, speaking of the *three* nations of Gallia Comata, says—"† Habent facundiam suam, *magistrosque* sapientiæ, "Druidas." ‡

Sotion, in Libro successionum, confirmat, *Druidas, divini, humanique Juris, peritissimos fuisse.* §

The learned Mr. Whitaker regards the three first books of the *Laws* of *Howel*, as comprising the Laws of the *Ancient* Britons. And the *Manksmen* ascribe to the Druids, those excellent laws, by which the Isle of Man has always been governed. ‖

Whether these decisions be allowed in a full, or only in a qualified sense, they seem utterly incompatible with the doctrine of that chair, which admits of a *continual lapse* in religious principles, the only real foundation of laws and of morals; which disallows the *existence* of *human authority*, and insists upon an *equality* so absolute, as to preclude all just subordination, and established order in society.

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* Borlase, B. II. ch. 13, from Strabo, Lib. IV.

† "They have an eloquence of their own, and their Druids as teachers of "wisdom."

‡ Lib. III. c. 2.

§ Lel. de Script. Brit. p. 5.

‖ See Carte's Hist. p. 46.

That admirable Triad, recorded by Diogenes Laertius, as a leading principle of the Druids, is of a complexion very different from this. It recommends *piety* towards the Deity, *innocence* in our intercourse with mankind, and the *exercise of fortitude* in the personal character: and hence it prepares us to look for something of value in their moral instructions.

And as the Bards profess to have drawn all their doctrines from the Druidical fountain, I think, there is no subject which ascertains the authenticity of their pretensions better, than that of moral instruction, and the study of human nature. Their lessons of this kind, however, are generally comprised in short and pithy aphorisms.

Amongst the most curious remains of the old Bards, we may class those metrical sentences, called *tribanau*, or *triplets*. Each of these is divided into three short verses, which are again united by the final rhymes.

The most singular feature of these versicles is, that the sense of the two first verses has no *obvious* connection with that of the last. The first line contains some trivial remark, suggested by the state of the air, the season of the year, the accidental meeting of some animal, or the like. To this is frequently subjoined, something that savours more of reflection; then the third line comes home to the heart, with a weighty moral precept, or a pertinent remark upon men and manners. My meaning will be best explained by a few examples.

Eiry mynydd—gwangcus Iâr—
Gochwiban gwynt ar dalar—
Yn yr ing gorau yw'r Câr.

"Snow of the mountain! the bird is ravenous for food—
"Keen whistles the blast on the headland—In distress, the
"friend is most valuable!"

Glaw allan, yngan clydwr—
Melyn eithin! crîn evwr!—
Duw Rheen, py beraist lyvwr!

"It rains without, and here is a shelter—What! the
"yellow furze, or the rotten hedge! Creating God! why
"hast thou formed the slothful!"

Y ddeilen a drevyd Gwynt*—
Gwae hi o'i thynged—
Hên hi! eleni y ganed!

"The leaf is tossed about by the wind—
"Alas, how wretched is fate!—
"It is old! But, *this year was it born!*"

I seem already to perceive a smile upon the countenance of the critical reader. The force of the concluding maxim, or the depth of reflection, and accuracy of remark, which it evinces, will hardly protect our Druidical lectures from the charge of *puerile conceit.* I do not bring forward our British Doctors as men of the highest polish, or most accurate taste. But let us consider, if any thing can be said in their defence.

Some praise must be due to the ingenuity of a device, which was calculated, through the rudeness of ancient

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* The true reading seems to be—
Y ddeilen-gwynt a'i threved.

British society, to lead the mind, imperceptibly, from a trivial remark upon the screaming of hungry birds, the state of the weather, or a dry leaf tossed about by the wind, to the contemplation of moral truth, or to pertinent reflection upon the state of man. And these triplets, which the people learned by rote, were peculiarly adapted to produce such a salutary effect.

For the introductory objects of remark, being of the most familiar kind, were daily before their eyes: and their very occurrence would naturally suggest those maxims and reflections, which the memory had already connected with them. A nation wholly unrefined, and which, at best, had but a scanty supply of books, and those in few hands, must have found the benefit of this mode of instruction. Whatever page of nature was presented to their view, their teachers had contrived to make it a page of wisdom.

Let us apply this observation to the examples which I have given. The appearance of snow upon the hills, or of hungry and screaming birds, suggests the remark—"There "is snow upon the mountain; the bird screams for food." With this, the memory connects the second clause, describing a cold and dreary season, in which *man*, as well as the wild fowl, probably felt distress. "Keen whistles the "blast on the headland." Then the third clause, drawn by the chain of memory, comes home to the bosom, and excites a feeling suitable to such a season. "In distress, "the friend is most valuable." As if his heart had commanded him—"Now go, and perform the most sacred of "social duties—relieve thy distressed friend."

So, in the second triplet, a man who has neglected his duty or his business, to indulge an indolent habit, is reminded, by a sprinkling shower, of the trivial remark—"It rains without, but here is a shelter." He then recollects—"What, the yellow furze, or the rotten hedge!" And is ashamed of his indolence. This feeling is immediately strengthened by the emphatical reflection—"Creating God! why hast thou formed the slothful!"

The emblem of the shortness and frailty of human life, in the third example, is sufficiently obvious.

I shall subjoin a few more translated specimens of Celtic ethics.

"It is the eve of winter—social converse is pleasant—"The gale and the storm keep equal pace—To preserve a "secret, is the part of the skilful (Celvydd)."

"It is the eve of winter. The stags are lean—the tops "of the birch are yellow: deserted is the summer dwelling "—Woe to him who, for a trifling advantage, merits "disgrace."

"Though it be small, yet ingenious is the bird's fabric "in the skirt of the wood—The virtuous and the happy "are of equal age."

"Chill and wet is the mountain—Cold is the grey ice—"Trust in God; he will not deceive thee; nor will persevering patience leave thee long in affliction."

"It rains without; the brake is drenched with the shower "—The sand of the sea is white with its crown of foam—"Patience is the fairest light for man."

" Snow of the mountain! bare is the top of the reed—
" The man of discretion cannot associate with the silly—
" Where nothing has been learned, there can be no ge-
" nius."

" Snow of the mountain! the fish are in the shallow
" stream—The lean, crouching stag seeks the shady glen—
" God will prosper the industry of man."

" Snow of the mountain! the birds are tame—The dis-
" creetly happy needs only to be born—God himself cannot
" procure good for the wicked."

Though it be admitted, that this method of teaching moral wisdom, was continued by the Britons for some time after the introduction of Christianity, yet I, think, for several reasons, that this singular mode of classing the ideas, was derived from the school of the Druids; and that several of the triplets, still extant, have descended from their times.

The sentences are divided into *three* members each; and *three* was a sacred and mystical number amongst the Druids.

The metre is also the most ancient, of which the Welsh have any tradition. And it does not appear from history, that the Britons could have borrowed the model of such composition from any nation with which they were connected, since the period of the Roman conquest.

The plan of these triplets has that mixture of rude simplicity, and accurate observation, which history ascribes to the Druids. Here, the barbaric muse appears in her rustic dress, without a single ornament of cultivated taste.

This sententious way of writing has, for many centuries, become obsolete amongst the Welsh. Nothing of this character is found in those Bards who have written since the Norman conquest. Even the metre has scarcely been used since the time of Llywarch Hên, in the sixth century. Taliesin and Aneurin seem to have rejected it as antiquated, and too simple and unadorned.

The introduction of this style of philosophizing, was certainly long before the time of any known Bard, whose works are now extant. For in our oldest poems, we find several of these maxims detached from their connection, and used as common-place aphorisms. And moreover, the very same aphorisms, as being now public property, are employed, without scruple, by several contemporary Bards, though the simple form of the triplet had been generally laid aside.

Beside the triplets here described, there are certain moral stanzas, of six or eight lines each, consisting of detached sentences, connected only by the final rhymes, and each stanza beginning with *Eiry Mynydd, Snow of the Mountain.* These seem to be nothing more than metrical arrangements of aphorisms, taken from ancient triplets. The two first are as follows : *

" Snow of the mountain! troublesome is the world!

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* Twelve of these are ascribed to *Mervin Gwawdrydd,* whose age is unknown, unless it be a corrupt reading for *Aneurin Gwawdrydd;* and nineteen bear the name of a son of Llywarch Hên.

" No man can foretel the accidents to which wealth is ex-
" posed. Arrogance will not arrive at a state of security.
" Prosperity often comes after adversity. Nothing endures
" but for a season. To deceive the innocent, is utterly dis-
" graceful. No man will ever thrive by vice. On God
" alone let us place our dependence."

" Snow of the mountain! white is the horn of smoke.
" The thief is in love with darkness. Happy is the man
" who has done no evil. The froward is easily allured to
" do mischief. No good befals the lascivious person. An
" old grudge often ends in a massacre. A fault is most
" conspicuous in a prince. Give less heed to the ear, than
" to the eye."

The following are amongst the aphorisms of the other stanzas.

" A noble descent is the most desolate of widows, unless
" it be wedded to some eminent virtue."

" In contending with direful events, great is the resource
" of human reason."

" The most painful of diseases, is that of the heart."

" The leader of the populace is seldom long in office."

" For the ambitious, the limits of a kingdom are too
" narrow."

" The blessing of competency is not inferior to that of
" abundance."

"When the hour of extravagance is spent, that of indi-
"gence succeeds."

"Many are the friends of the golden tongue."

"Beware of treating any thing with contempt."

"Obstruct not the prospect of futurity, to provide for
"the present."

"Pride is unseemly in a ruler."

"The virgin's best robe is her modesty; but confidence
"is graceful in a man."

"Freely acknowledge the excellence of thy betters."

"A useful calling is more valuable than a treasure."

"Like a ship in the midst of the sea, without rope, or
"sail or anchor, is the young man who despises advice."

The stanzas of the *months*, ascribed to Aneurin, are entitled to some notice, as containing a singular mixture of moral and physical remarks. Thus, for example.

"In the month of April, thin is the air upon the heights.
"The oxen are weary. Bare is the surface of the ground.
"The guest is entertained, though he be not invited. The
"stag looks dejected. Playful is the hare. Many are
"the faults of him who is not beloved.* Idleness is un-
"worthy of the healthy. Shame has no place on the cheek

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* Or, *Who has no friend.*

" of the upright. Desolation awaits the children of the
" unjust. After arrogance, comes a long abasement."

The *Viaticum* of *Llevoed*, a Bard of the tenth century, is the most modern production of any known author in this aphoristical style. I give the following specimens.

" Wealth of the world! let it go; let it come! Be it
" disposed of as it may. A state of anxiety is upon a level
" with real penury. Serenity will succeed, when the rain
" is over."

" Amongst the children of the same nursery, equality is
" seldom found: the brave will play, whilst his blood is
" flowing about him: the submissive will be trampled
" upon: the fierce will be avoided: the discreet is in co-
" venant with prosperity; to him, God pours forth his
" bounty."

" Confidence in noble blood, is like the billow that meets
" the shore: whilst we are calling out—*Lo there!*' it has
" already subsided,"

" Incurious is the man who observes not—who, though
" he regard it unmoved, does not consider what may hap-
" pen hereafter."

" Woe to the land where there is no religion!"

" The man who disbelieves a God, is incapable of reason."

" The man who breaks the unity of society, is the ble-
" mish of the assembly, the affliction of the womb that
" bare him, the detestation of the country."

"Even in an act of profusion, have regard to economy."

"A profession is calculated for society; a treasure-bag
"for banishment."

"The founding of a city, is the ruin of a desert."

A complete collection of the adages and moral maxims, preserved in the Welsh language, would fill a considerable volume. Hence it appears, that the application of the Bards to moral science, as well as the other pursuits of their genius, justifies their pretensions to the lore of the ancient Druids.

SECTION II.

General View of Druidical Theology—Character and Rites of Hu, *the Helio-Arkite God—the Bacchus of the heathen Britons.*

In the introductory section of this Essay, I have brought home the profession of Druidism to the ancient Welsh Bards; and, by a collation of several of the topics upon which they expiate, with classical authorities, have proved the justice of their claim to that character which they assume. I have also shewn, that the mythological Triads are founded in genuine British tradition; and that the notices which these documents present, are, for the most part, consistent with the works of those Bards, who profess themselves disciples of the Druids.

From these authentic remains of British lore, I shall now endeavour to deduce such a general view of the theology and rites of our heathen ancestors, as the nature and extent of these documents will admit of. To attempt a complete investigation of every minute part of this subject, and to prepare myself to answer every question that may be asked, is not in my contemplation. This would be imposing upon myself a task, difficult in execution, and, perhaps, not very gratifying to the Public in its accomplishment. The hardy antiquary, who shall dare to penetrate far into the labyrinth of British mythology, will have frequent occasion to complain of the interruption of his clue, and the defect of monuments, amongst our half Christian Bards. Yet the same Bards furnish hints abundantly sufficient, to point out in what the Druidical superstition chiefly consisted, and from what foundation it arose. And this seems to be all that can be interesting or important in the subject before us.

As I would willingly qualify my reader, to satisfy his own curiosity, and form his own opinion, independent of mine, I shall suffer no assertion of moment to intrude upon him, without a full exhibition of the passage upon which it is grounded. This seems requisite in the present case. Were my evidence to be drawn from the writers of Greece and Rome, or from well-known authors of modern times, it might be sufficient to cite books, chapters, and verses. But as Cambro-British documents are less accessible to the learned, I deem it expedient to produce the original words of my authors, with close English translations. Such authorities will be occasionally introduced, where the subject calls for them. As several of the ancient poems, however, are of a miscellaneous nature, upon which various remarks will arise, I have thrown a collection of them together, as as Appendix, and I shall refer to them as they are numbered.

Before I enter upon the discussion, it may be proper to apprize my reader, of the general deductions I make from these documents, respecting the nature and source of the Druidical superstition, that he may have a clear prospect of the point at which I mean to arrive, and be better enabled to judge of my progress towards it.

Druidism, then, as we find it in British documents, was a system of superstition, composed of heterogeneous principles. It acknowledges certain divinities, under a great variety of names and attributes. These divinities were, originally, nothing more than deified mortals, and material objects; mostly connected with the history of the deluge: but in the progress of error, they were regarded as symbolized by the sun, moon, and certain stars, which, in consequence of this confusion, were venerated with divine honours.

And this superstition apparently arose, from the gradual or accidental corruption of the patriarchal religion, by the abuse of certain commemorative honours, which were paid to the ancestors of the human race, and by the admixture of Sabian idolatry.

Such is the general impression, that the study of ancient British writings leaves upon my mind. This view, I am aware, differs from the opinion maintained by some respectable authors, that the Druids acknowledged the unity of God.*

If ever they made such a profession, they must be understood in the sense of other heathens, who occasionally declared, that their multitude of false gods really constituted but one character; and not as implying, that they worshipped the true God, and him alone.

That they had no knowledge or recollection of the GREAT FIRST CAUSE, I will not venture to assert. I have some reason to conclude, that they did acknowledge his existence, and his providence; but they saw him faintly, through the thick veil of superstition, and their homage and adoration were almost wholly engrossed by certain supposed agents, of a subordinate nature.

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* See Antiq. of Cornwall, p. 107.

And the view of this subject, presented by the Bards, is consistent with history. Cæsar, in his deliberate and circumstantial account of the Druids, gives us this information. "Multa—[*] de *Deorum immortalium* vi, ac potestate, "disputant, et juventuti tradunt. Deum maxime Mercu-"rium colunt—hunc omnium inventorem artium ferunt "—post hunc, Apollinem, et Martem, et Jovem, et Mi-"nervam. De his eandem *ferè*, quam reliquæ gentes, ha-"bent opinionem," &c.

This memorial was drawn up, after the historian had enjoyed a long and intimate acquaintance with Divitiacus, one of the principal of the order in Gaul; and after his repeated expeditions into Britain, where the institution was affirmed to have originated, and where it was observed with superior accuracy in his time. Testimonies so precise and minute, coming from a writer thus circumstanced, must imply a considerable degree of publicity in this part of the Druidical doctrine. The priests of Gaul and Britain acknowledged a plurality of divinities, and maintained opinions respecting them, which were the same, in substance, with those of the Greeks and Romans.

The gravity and dignity of our author's character, the pointed precision of his language, together with the peculiar access to accurate information, which his situation offered, must place his testimony above the reach of critical objection.

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[*] They dispute largely concerning the force and power of the immortal gods, and instruct the youth in their principles. Of all the gods, they pay the greatest honours to Mercury, whom they represent as the inventor of all arts. After him, they worship Apollo, and Mars; and Jupiter, and Minerva. Their opinion respecting these, nearly coincides with that of other nations, &c.

Some allowance, however, may be demanded, for the force of the qualifying particle, *ferè;* and the whole passage may be understood as implying, that the similarity between the Celtic and the Roman superstition, was such, as to give Cæsar a general impression of their identity; and such as may furnish us with an argument, that they originally sprung from the same source; though the gods of the Druids may not have exactly corresponded with those of the Greeks or Romans, in their pedigree, their names, or their attributes.

The Druidical corresponded with the general superstition, not only in its theology, but also in the ceremonies by which the gods were worshipped. Dionysius informs us, that the rites of *Bacchus* were duly celebrated in the British islands:* and Strabo cites the authority of Artemidorus, that, "In "an island close to Britain, Ceres and Proserpine are venerated, with rites similar to the orgies of Samothrace."†

As it is, then, an historical fact, that the mythology and the rites of the Druids were the same, in substance, with those of the Greeks and Romans, and of other nations which came under their observation, it must follow, that these superstitions are reducible to the same principles, and that they proceeded from the same source.

And here our British documents point, with clearness and energy, to the very same conclusions, which have been drawn by the best scholars, and most able antiquaries, who have treated of general mythology.

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* Perieg. V. 565, &c.

† Lib. IV.

Mr. Bryant, the great analyzer of heathen tradition, has, with luminous ability, traced the superstition of the Gentiles to the *deification* of *Noah,* his *ark,* and his *immediate progeny,* joined with the idolatrous worship of *the host of heaven.*

With a dutiful regard to his illustrious master, though superior to servile imitation, Mr. Faber pursues the investigation still farther, and discovers, that *Noah was worshipped in conjunction with the sun,* and *the ark in conjunction with the moon;* and that *these were the principal divinities of the heathens.* With this author's *mysteries of the Cabiri,* I was wholly unacquainted, at the time when I drew up the present Essay; but I found in this book so many points of coincidence with my previous observations, that I determined to revise the whole, to alter a few paragraphs, and add occasional notes.

That the opinion of the Public is not uniformly favourable to these authors, I am fully aware.

Some critics, taking a distant and prospective view of the subject, pronounce it an improbable hypothesis, that all antiquity should be *so mad after Noah and the ark;* whilst others, finding that the authors indulge in a fanciful system of etymology, coldly remark upon the fallacy of such a principle, and toss the books aside, as unworthy of farther notice. But surely it may be presumed, that those who thus condemn them in the mass, had either too much prejudice, or too little patience, to go step by step over the ground. Men of learning and genius may have been seduced, by a favourite system, into minute and particular errors and absurdities; and yet, the main scope of their argument may be perfectly just, and their general conclusions founded in truth.

In the supposition, that Noah was a principal object of superstition to the Gentile world, I can discover no absurdity *a priori*. It is admitted, that some, at least, of the heathen gods were nothing more than deified mortals, and that the worship of such gods was introduced very soon after the age of Noah. It is then natural to presume, that this distinguished person must have been the first object of selection, in consequence of his relative situation, as the universal king of the world, and the great patriarch of all the infant nations. To this, some weight may be added, from his character and history, as the *Just Man*, whose integrity preserved himself and his family amidst the ruins of a perishing world. And this superstition being once set on foot, would naturally extend its honours to his sons and immediate descendants, as the founders of their respective nations.

So again it is easy to conceive, that even in the age of Noah, the ark was commemorated with great respect, as the *means* of miraculous preservation; and that a growing superstition soon seized upon it, as an object of idolatrous worship; or else, represented that *Providence*, which had guided it in safety, through the tumult of a boundless deluge, as a benign goddess, the *Genius* of the sacred vessel.

Just so the brazen serpent, set up by Moses in the wilderness, was adored by the idolatrous Israelites*—just so, the Cross and the Virgin Mary are at this day abused by the church of Rome.

There is, therefore, no absurdity in the grounds of the hypothesis, which can be allowed to militate against the clear deduction of facts.

The scheme of etymology, it must be owned, has been carried to great lengths by these learned authors: and here, I think, they often lay themselves open to the censure of men, whose genius and attainments are greatly inferior to their own.

The Greeks having admitted, that many of the terms connected with their superstition were of foreign origin, and some writers having asserted, that the language of the mysteries was that of *Egypt*, or of *Assyria*, these mythologists undertake to retrace the sacred terms of heathenism, to the fountain from whence they sprung. With this view, each of them has selected a list of ancient primitives from various languages, but chiefly from the Hebrew and its dialects. Into these primitives, they resolve the sacred terms of all nations. The names of gods, heroes, &c. which, to the ordinary scholar, appear nothing more than plain Greek or Latin, are all referred to this mystic vocabulary. Hence arises an occasion of charging the Greeks with the gross perversion of sacred titles and symbols, and the puerile corruption of foreign words, into something of similar sound in their own idiom, but of very different import from the original tradition; and hence the magisterial practice of carrying them back, in disjointed syllables, to their supposed originals.

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* 2 Kings, ch. xviii. v. 4.

This has given offence to many critical readers, who maintain, that by such a mode of proceeding, any common word may be forced into whatever meaning the author pleases. How far such a scheme of etymology may be allowed, I shall not pretend to determine. At the same time, I must acknowledge that, in my apprehension, these gentlemen have made an injudicious, as well as an intemperate use of it. Proofs of this kind seldom amount to demonstration. They give the reader too many occasions of hesitating, or of differing in opinion from his author; and thus tend to lessen that confidence, which might otherwise have been preserved by the legitimate argument, and the candid exposition of recorded facts, which are to be found in the works before us.

Could I give an unqualified assent to the justice of these etymologies, yet, in my present subject, I should not be able to reduce them to general practice. For though most of the sacred terms, employed in the British documents, have meanings appropriate to the business in hand, and should therefore be translated, yet by far the greatest part of them are native terms of the British language, and have the same import with the corresponding terms in Greek mythology.

Were I then to admit, that the Greek terms are nothing more than etymological blunders, I must also infer that the Britons, who furnish us with the very same blunders in their own dialect, derived their mythology immediately from the Greeks: but I have some reason to believe that this was not the case.

In the mystic Bards and tales, I find certain terms, which evidently pertain to the Hebrew language, or to some dialect of near affinity; as *Adonai*, the *Lord; Al Adur*, the *Glorious God; Arawn*, the *Arkite*, and the like.

Taliesin, the chief Bard, declares, that his lore had been detailed in *Hebraic;** and in a song, the substance of which he professes to have derived from the sacred *Ogdoad*, or *Arkites*, there are several lines together in some foreign dialect, apparently of great affinity with the Hebrew, though obscured by British orthography. † Hence I think it probable, that the Britons once had certain mystic poems, composed in some dialect of Asia; that this is a fragment of those poems; and that those parts of their superstition, which were not properly Celtic, were derived from that quarter of the globe. And if so, our ancestors could not have obtained their sacred vocabulary, by adopting the mere grammatical blunders of the Greeks.

Thus I am compelled to decline any general assistance from the derivations of our learned mythologists. At the same time, I shall not scruple to remark occasional coincidences between British terms, and those which appear in their works. This, I trust, I may do with impunity. If some of their etymologies are forced or doubtful, others may be natural, and well founded.

Thus far I have deemed it prudent to meet the objections of criticism. Should this compromise prove unsatisfactory, I must farther declare, that the basis of my argument does not rest upon the works of these authors. I cite them only for collateral proof, or elucidation of the evidence which I draw from another source; and, for the purpose of verifying the report of history, that the superstition of the Druids was radically the same with that of other nations. In my attempt to establish my main proposition, I mean to stand or fall upon my own ground.

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* See Appendix, No, 13.

† Ibid. No. 12.

And to this end I must, first of all, produce evidence, that the people who professed Druidism, retained some memorials of the deluge, and of the patriarch of the new world.

The subject has already been touched upon in the volume which I lately published. I there remarked a curious record in the British Triads, of *an awful event,* namely, *The bursting forth of the Lake of Llion, and the overwhelming of the face of all lands; so that all mankind were drowned, excepting Dwyvan and Dwyvach, who escaped in a naked vessel* (or a vessel without sails), *and by whom the island of Britain was repeopled.*

To this I subjoined a tradition, taken from the same documents, of the *Master-works, or great achievements of the Island of Britain.* The first of these was, *Building the ship of Nevydd Nâv Neivion, which carried in it a male and a female of every animal species, when the Lake of Llion burst forth: and the second was, The drawing of the Avanc to land, out of the lake, by the oxen of Hu Gadarn, so that the lake burst no more.**

These are evident traditions of the deluge; and their

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* See *Celt. Res.* p. 157, from *Archaiology* of *Wales,* V. II. p. 59, and 71.

locality, as well as their other peculiarities, furnishes sufficient proof, that they must have been *ancient national traditions.* Such memorials as these cannot be supposed to have originated in the perversion of the sacred records, during any age subsequent to the introduction of Christianity. The contrary appears, from their whimsical discrepancy with historical fact.

The Britons, then, had a tradition of a deluge, which had overwhelmed all lands; but this deluge, according to them, was occasioned by the sudden bursting of a lake. One vessel had escaped the catastrophe: in this a *single* man and *woman* were preserved; and as Britain and its inhabitants were, *in their estimation,* the most important objects in the world, so we are told, that *this island,* in an especial manner, was repeopled by the man and woman who had escaped. This has no appearance of having been drawn from the record of Moses: it is a mere mutilated tradition, such as was common to most heathen nations.

So again, the Britons had a tradition, that a vessel had been provided, somewhere or other, to preserve a single family, and the race of animals, from the destruction of a deluge; but they possessed only a mutilated part of the real history: and, as tradition positively affirmed, that *their own ancestors* were concerned in the building of this vessel, they naturally ascribed the achievement to that country, in which their progenitors had been settled from remote antiquity. And lastly, they had a tradition, that some great operating cause protected the world from a repetition of the deluge. They had lost sight of the true history, which rests this security upon the promise of the *supreme Being,* and ascribed it to the feat of a yoke of oxen, which drew the *avanc,* or *beaver,* out of the lake.

And the want of more accurate information gave them an opportunity of placing this ideal achievement in the island of Britain.

In such tales as these, we have only the vestiges of heathenism. Even the locality of British tradition is exactly similar to that of other heathen reports. To give one instance.

The flood of Deucalion was undoubtedly the flood of Noah. It is described by Greek and Latin writers, with circumstances which apply exclusively to this event. There never has been another deluge, which could have *borne a vessel to the top of a lofty mountain*, and which *destroyed the whole human race*, excepting those who were preserved in that vessel. Yet the Thessalians represented Deucalion, the person preserved, as one of their own princes, and affirmed, that the vessel which escaped the deluge, rested upon the top of Parnassus, a mountain of their own country.

It may be remarked, that upon their popular tradition of the deluge, the Britons grounded another national error. They represented the Cymry as having descended from one *mother* (the woman who disembarked from the sacred ship), *within this island*, or, in other words, that this was the cradle of the Cymry nation. And it appears from Cæsar, that the Britons of his age, in the interior of this island, had the very same *ancient tradition* or *memorial*. Britanniæ pars interior ab iis incolitur, *quos natos in insulâ ipsâ*, MEMORIA PRODITUM dicunt.*

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* De Bell. Gal. L. V. c. 12.

But the mass of heathen tradition is always found to have some degree of inconsistency with itself. Some circumstance of true history, which is disguised in one tale, is frequently let out in another. Thus I have remarked a tradition in the same Triads, which brings the Cymry under the conduct of *Hú*, from a place called *Defrobani*, in the land of *Hâv;* and this is understood to imply the neighbourhood of Constantinople, in the eastern part of Thrace. The former may have been the popular tradition of the interior Britons, or what their teachers thought proper to inculcate to the multitude; whilst the latter belonged to those who had preserved a few more vestiges of ancient history. And that this had been the route of the Cymry, in their progress out of Asia into Britain, is incidentally confirmed by the popular tradition of the Britons respecting the deluge. For though the memory of this event was almost universal, yet the traditions of every people upon this subject, had some circumstances which were local, or nationally discriminative. And the tradition of *Britons*, and of the *Samothracians*, as to the cause of the deluge, were precisely the same.

The British tradition tells us, that *the waters of a lake burst forth*, and the inundation covered the face of all lands. The same tale was told in the ancient *Samos,* which was, perhaps, the *S'Hâm* of British mythology.

> " Samothrace is famous for a deluge which inundated the
> " country, and reached the very top of the mountains.
> " This inundation, which happened before the age of the
> " Argonauts, *was owing to the sudden overflow of the waters*
> " *of the Euxine, which the ancients considered merely as a*
> " *lake.*"*

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* Lempriere Bib. Class. V. *Samothracia.*

That the perversion of real history, in both these accounts, is precisely the same, must be obvious to every one. Such a peculiar coincidence could not have happened, without direct communication: and the tradition could not have become *national,* without having been brought by a colony from one nation to another, and preserved without interruption. But the mythology of Samothrace mounts up to a very remote æra of antiquity, and the *Euxine,* in its neighbourhood, with its wide extent, and narrow outlet, furnishes a more probable occasion for such a tale, than any lake in the neighbourhood of Britain. Hence the supposition, that this mythological story came with a colony from the region contiguous to the ancient Samos into Britain, agreeably to the *memorial* of our ancestors, and the tale of *Hu,* seems much more plausible, than the converse of that proposition. And here the testimony of Artemidorus, that the mysteries of Ceres and Proserpine were celebrated in one of the British islands, *with the same rites as in Samothrace,* tends to corroborate the inference which I draw from our national tradition.

The allusions to the deluge, in British mythology, come under various points of view. On a former occasion,* I referred the history of *Dylan Ail Môr, Dylan, Son of the Sea,* or *Ail Ton, Son of the Wave,* to this event. But in looking over Mr. Owen's Cambrian Biography, a volume which appeared whilst my book was in the press, I observe, that the author is of a different opinion, which he thus expresses.

" *Dylan ail Ton,* a chieftain who lived about the begin-

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* Celt. Res. p. 163.

" ning of the sixth century, whose elegy, composed by
" Taliesin, is preserved in the Welsh Archaiology."

As Mr. Owen grounds his opinion upon this *elegy*, I shall examine its contents. In the mean time, I may be allowed, in support of my own assertion, to bring forward a few passages, in which this name occurs. I shall leave the result with the reader.

Taliesin, in his *Cad Goddeu*,* speaks thus of Dylan—

" Truly I was *in the ship*
" *With Dylan, Son of the Sea*,
" Embraced in the centre,
" Between the Royal knees,
" When, like the rushing of hostile spears,
" The floods came forth,
" From Heaven, to the great deep."

This passage surely has an evident allusion to the deluge. The Bard, therefore, must have regarded *Dylan* as no other than the patriarch who survived that catastrophe, and whom he *justly* styles *Teyrnedd*, or *Royal*, as being the universal monarch of the new world.

So again, in his *Mabgyvreu*, † the same Bard alludes to the British tradition of the deluge, and speaks of the day of *Dylan*, as a peculiar theme of his muse.

Arall ni chân—wyd
Dy ysgwyd allan,

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* W. Archaiol. p. 30.

† Ibid. p. 24.

Pan yw gofaran—twrwf
Tonneu wrth lan,
Yn nial Dylan;
Dydd a haedd attan.

" No other Bard will sing—the violence
" Of convulsive throes,
" When forth proceeded—with thundering din,
" The billows against the shore,
" In Dylan's day of vengeance—
" *A day which extends to us.*"

The last line of this passage, as I shall shew hereafter, alludes to certain mystic rites, which the Druids celebrated in commemoration of the deluge.

Casnodyn, an eminent Bard of the fourteenth century, in speaking of the future judgment, alludes to this passage of Taliesin, and copies several of his words: at the same time, he introduces certain images, which may remind us of the Druidical opinion, that *fire* and *water* would, at some period, prevail over the world.*

" He whom we know, will suddenly prepare the field of " judgment: to us will he come, and will not keep silence. " When God shall reveal his countenance, the house of " earth will uplift itself over us: a panic of the noise of " legions in the conflict, will urge on the flight: harshly, " the loud-voiced wind will call: *the variegated wave will* " *dash around the shore*; the glancing flame will take to " itself the vengeance of justice, recruited by the heat of " contending fires, ever bursting forth."†

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* Strabo, L. IV.

† W. Archaiol. p. 431.

In the same poem, the Bard thus expresses himself, in an address to the Supreme Being—

Trevnaist sŷr a mŷr morawl Dylan.

" Thou didst set in order the stars, and *the seas, of the* " *sea-faring Dylan*."

Hence it is clear, that the ancient and modern Bards regarded *Dylan, the son of the sea,* as no other personage than the patriarch, whose history is connected with that of the deluge.

It is now time to look for the elegy, which Taliesin composed for this venerable character. This little piece is not to be found in the Archaiology; but, from a copy in my possession, I am led to conclude that the title is erroneous, and that, instead of being called *Marwnad Dylan,* the *Elegy of Dylan,* it ought to have been, *Cerdd am Ddylan,* a *Song respecting Dylan.* The argument is simply this.

A certain plain having been inundated in the age of our Bard, he expostulates with the Deity upon the occasion of this event. He then makes a natural transition to the mythology of the flood of Dylan, or the deluge, which had been occasioned by the *profligacy* of mankind, and concludes with a prayer for the deliverance of his countrymen from the existing calamity.

Some of the lines are imperfect in my copy; but with the correction of a few syllables, as suggested equally by the sense, by the measure, and by the alliteration which that measure requires, it stands as follows—

Un Duw uchav,
Dewin doethav,
Mwyav o vael.
Py delis maes,
Pwy ai swynas
Yn llaw trahael?
Neu gynt nog ev
Pwy oedd tangnev,
Ar reddv gavael?
Gwrthriv gwastradth
Gwenwyn a wnaeth
Gwaith gwythloesedd.
Gwenyg Dylan
Adwythig lan,
Gwaith yn hydredd.
Ton Iwerddon,
Ton Vanawon
A thon Ogledd.
A thon Prydain
Torvoedd virain
Yn beddirwedd—
Golychav i Dâd,
Duw, Dovydd Dâd,
Gwlad heb omedd:
Creawdr Celi
A'n cynnwys ni
Yn drugaredd!

Which may be thus translated—

"O sole, supreme God, most wise unfolder of secrets, "most beneficent! What has befallen the plain, who has "enchanted it in the hands of the most generous! In for-

" mer times, what has been more peaceful than this district,
" as a natural possession!

" It was the counter-reckoning of profligacy, which pro-
" duced the bane in the laborious pang of wrath—*the bil-*
" *lows of Dylan furiously attacked the shore:* forth, impe-
" tuously, rushed the wave of Ireland, the wave of the
" Manks, the Northern wave, and the wave of Britain,
" nurse of the fair tribes, in four orders.

" I will pray to the Father, God, the Ruler, the Father
" who reigns without control, that he, the Creator, the
" Mysterious One, would embrace us with his mercy!"

This little ode, I think, cannot supply the slightest shade of authority, for ranking *Dylan ail Ton* amongst the British chieftains of the sixth century. The name merely occurs in the recital of a few circumstances of the national and local tradition of our ancestors, respecting the deluge; and thus it connects the character of *Dylan* with that of *Dwyvan*, and *Nevydd Nâv Neivion*, recorded in the Triads.

Dylan, the *Declan* of Irish tradition, sounds like a contraction of Deucalion; and the people who preserved this name, affirm, that they derived their origin from the neighbourhood of Thessaly, where the story of Deucalion was told. But not to insist upon these circumstances, I may be allowed to remark, that the *sea*, the *waves*, or even the *streams* of *Dylan*, are used in the Welsh language, to denote the main ocean, or a boundless expanse of water; and that the metaphor evidently refers to the deluge.

Having now produced some evidence, that the Britons did retain certain memorials of the deluge, and of the patriarch who survived that catastrophe, I will, in the next place, consider their representation of that patriarch's character, that we may discover how far their notions respecting him, and the incidents of his days, affected their national religion.

This venerable personage has already been introduced by a variety of names, as *Dwyvan, Nevydd Nâv Neivion,* and *Dylan;* but we have had no positive evidence that he received divine honours.

Were I permitted to lay stress upon obvious etymologies, I might say, that some of those names are remarkable, and import that proposition. Thus *Dwy,* cause, origin, the existent. *Dwy-van,* the *high* or *lofty cause*—the father of mankind. His wife's name was *Dwy-vach,* the *lesser cause*—the mother of mankind. These names seem analogous to the *Pangenetor* and *Magna Mater* of antiquity, which were objects of worship.

So again: *Nevydd,* as a derivative of *Nêv, Heaven,* implies the *celestial. Nâv,* a *Lord,* the *Creator:* like many other terms of ancient British mythology, it is still used as a name of the Supreme Being. *Neivion,* in the Bards, is a name of God. "Also the name of a person in the "British mythology, probably the same with Neptune."* So that *Nevydd Nav Neivion* is the *Celestial Lord Neivion.*

Under these consecrated characters, we may infer, that the patriarch Noah received divine honours; and consequently, that he constituted one of the principal divinities acknowledged by the Druids.

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* Owen's Dict. in *voce.*

This fact admits of absolute proof, when we contemplate the character of the same patriarch, as delineated under the name of Hu (pron. *Hee),* who secured the world from a repetition of the deluge, and whom the Cymry acknowledged as their remote *progenitor,* as the great *founder* of their *sacred and civil institutes,* and as their *God.*

In order to elucidate this subject, I shall, first of all, revise some of the evidence which I adduced upon a former occasion.

In a Triad already cited, after the account of the sacred ship which preserved the human and brute species, when the lake burst forth and drowned the world, is subjoined, *The drawing of the avanc to land out of the lake, by the oxen of* Hu Gadarn, *so that the lake burst no more.* Here his history is expressly referred to the *age of the deluge.* But what character did he support in that age? The mythological Triads represent him only as a human patriarch, and a lawgiver. The following particulars are recorded of him.

1. He lived in the time of the flood; and

2. With his oxen, he performed some achievement, which prevented the repetition of that calamity. Triad 97.*

3. He first collected together, or carried the primitive race; and

4. Formed them into communities or families. Triad 57.

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* These numbers refer to that series which begins p. 57. W. Archaiol. V. II.

5. He first gave traditional laws, for the regulation and government of society. Triad 92.

6. He was eminently distinguished for his regard to justice, equity, and peace. Triad 5.

7. He conducted the several families of the first race to their respective settlements in the various regions. Triad 4.

8. But he had instructed this race in the art of husbandry previous to their removal and separation. Triad 56.

Such are the particulars which I find recorded in those Triads, respecting *Hu the Mighty*. If characteristics like these determined my opinion, that the picture exclusively represented the patriarch Noah, I hope they have not led me to transgress the laws of criticism, which have been allowed in similar cases.

The great Mr. Bryant is satisfied with such marks as these: and he points out a delineation of the progenitor of all nations, in nearly the same words.

" The patriarch, under whatever title he may come, is
" generally represented as the father of Gods and men; but
" in the character of Phoroneus, (for in this he is plainly
" alluded to) he seems to be described merely, as the first
" of mortals. The outlines of his history are so strongly
" marked, that we cannot mistake to whom the mythology
" relates. *He lived in the time of the flood: He first built*
" *an altar: He first collected men together, and formed them*
" *into communities: He first gave laws, and distributed*

"*justice: He divided mankind by their families and nations,* "*over the face of the earth.*"*

If the learned be authorized by sound criticism, to refer the traditions of the Greeks to the incidents of primitive history, there can be no just reason for denying the like privilege to the Britons, in behalf of their national mythology, when they find it has recorded the very same circumstances. The character of *Hu* is, then, as justly referable to the patriarch Noah, as that of *Phoroneus.*

Before I trace the character of this personage, as delineated by the *ancient* Bards, it may be proper to hear what was said and thought of him in the middle ages. *Iolo Goch,* a learned Bard, who wrote in the fourteenth century, thus draws the portrait of *Hu,* as a patriarch.

Hu gadarn, pôr, hoew geidwawd
Brenin a roe'r gwîn a'r gwawd
Emherawdr tir a moroedd
A bywyd oll o'r byd oedd.
Ai dalioedd gwedy diliw
Aradr gwaisg arnoddgadr gwiw:
Er dangos ein ior dawngoeth
I'r dyn balch, a'r divalch doeth
Vod yn orau, nid gau gair,
Ungreft, gan y tâd iawngrair.

"Hu the Mighty, the sovereign, the ready protector, "a king, the giver of wine and renown, the *emperor of the* "*land and the seas,* and the *life of all that are in the world* "*was he.*

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* Analysis, V. II p. 266.

"*After the deluge, he held the strong-beamed plough,*
" active and excellent; this did our Lord of stimulating
" genius, that he might shew to the proud man, and to the
" humbly wise, the art which was most approved by the
" faithful father; nor is this sentiment false."

It is scarcely possible, that the character of Noah should be drawn in stronger colours, or with touches more exclusively appropriate. The picture can be ascribed to no other mortal.

Yet this patriarch was actually deified and worshipped, by the ancient Britons.—*Sion Cent,* an illustrious poet, of the fifteenth century, complains of the relics of the old superstition, and thus characterizes the religion of the votaries of *Hu,* as distinguished from that of Christ.

Dwy ryw awen dioer ewybr
Y sy'n y byd, loewbryd lwybr:
Awen gan Grist, ddidrist ddadl
O iawn dro, awen drwyadl:
Awen arall, nid call cant
Ar gelwydd, vudr argoeliant!
Yr hon a gavas gwyr Hu,
Carnrwysg prydyddion Cymru.

" Two active impulses truly, there are in the world;
" and their course is manifest; an impulse from Christ—
" joyful is the theme—of a right tendency: an energetic
" principle.

" Another impulse there is (indiscreetly sung) of *falshood*
" and *base omens:* this has been obtained by the men of
" Hu, the usurping Bards of Wales."

Here, the Welsh are charged with their devotion to *Hu,* as a Heathen God; nor was this complaint of the Christian Bard *wholly* out of season; for, however, strange it may appear in the present age, some of his contemporaries were not ashamed to avow themselves the votaries of this Pagan divinity. Of this, the following lines of *Rhys Brydydd* furnish a glaring proof.

Bychanav o'r bychenyd
Yw Hu Gadarn, ve i barn byd;
A Mwyav a Nav i ni,
Da Coeliwn, a'n Duw Celi.
Ysgawn ei daith ag esgud:
Mymryn tês gloewyn ei glud.
A mawr ar dir a moroedd
A mwyav a gav ar goedd,
Mwy no'r bybodd! 'marbedwn
Amharch gwael i'r mawr hael hwn!

" The smallest of the small is *Hu the Mighty,* in the " world's judgment; yet he *is the greatest,* and *Lord over us,* " *we sincerely believe,* and *our God of mystery.* Light is his " course, and swift: a *particle of lucid sunshine is his car.* " He *is great on land and seas—the greatest whom I shall* " *behold—greater than the worlds!* Let us beware of offering mean indignity to HIM, the *Great* and the *Bountiful!*"

Here we find that *Hu the Mighty,* whose history as a patriarch, is precisely that of Noah, was promoted to the rank of the principal *Demon God* amongst the Britons; and, as his *chariot was composed of the rays of the sun,* it may be presumed that he was worshipped, in conjunction with that luminary: and to the same superstition, we may refer what is said of his *light and swift course.*

Nor was *Hu* alone, elevated to the heavens, but even the *sacred oxen,* his constant attribute, were contemplated, as *bellowing in the thunder,* and *glaring in the lightning,* upon which subject we have the following lines, by *Llywelyn Moel.*

Ychain yn' o chynhenid
Hu Gadarn, a darn o'i did
A'i bum angel, a welwch,
A pheirian aur flamdan flwch.

" Should it be disputed, I assert—These are the oxen of
" *Hu the Mighty,* with a part of his chain, and his five
" angels (or attendants) which ye now behold, with a
" golden harness of active flame."

The *chain* and the *harness* allude to the mythological achievement of Hu and his oxen—the *drawing of the Avane out of the lake,* so as to prevent the repetition of the deluge.

Thus we find, that Hu Gadarn, to whom the Triads, evidently ascribe the exclusive history of Noah, is recognized in the same view precisely, by the Bards of the fourteenth century.

He is acknowledged as a *ready protector or preserver;* thus, the peculiar righteousness of Noah made him the *preserver* of the human race.

He is *the giver of wine and renown:* so Noah was the first who *planted a vineyard,* taught mankind the method of *preparing wine,* and pronounced a prophetic *eulogy* upon his dutiful sons.

Hu was the *Emperor of the land and seas:* so Noah was the *chief personage* in the ark, the only vessel which preserved life amidst the universal sea; and after that sea had subsided, he became the *emperor of the whole earth.*

Hu was *the life of all that are in the world;* thus, *Noah* was the *common parent* of all nations, and *of every individual.*

And lest we should retain any doubt as to the age in which he lived, we are told, that *immediately after the deluge,* he first taught mankind the *practice of agriculture:* this is, exclusively, the history of the patriarch Noah.

Yet we are assured, with equal clearness, that from the traditional character of this same patriarch, sprung a *religion of falsehood and base omens* or a heathen religion, which was directly contrary to Christianity. Nay, the same deified patriarch was regarded, as the *greatest God,* and viewed as *riding on the sun-beams,* or personified in the great luminary, and operating in the clouds and meteors of heaven.

That such a superstition should have been fabricated by the Bards in the middle ages of Christianity, is a supposition utterly irreconcileable with probability. We must, therefore, regard it as a relic of the old heathen superstition of the country, which some individual Britons, with their proverbial predilection for antiquated notions and customs, no less impiously than absurdly retained.

But if this be genuine British heathenism, it will be expected, that the vestiges of it should be discovered in the oldest Bards, which are now extant. And here, in fact, they present themselves in horrid profusion. The first instances I shall produce, are taken from Aneurin's *Gododin,* of which the reader will find a translation in the fourth section of this Essay.

The Bard is lamenting a dreadful massacre, which happened in the fifth century, near a celebrated heathen temple, which he describes in these words:

" It is an imperative duty to sing the complete associates,
" the cheerful ones of *the ark of the world. Hu* was not
" without his selection in *the circle of the world;* it was his
" choice to have Eidiol the Harmonicus." *

Here we find, that the selection of a priest to preside in this temple, was peculiarly the act and privilege of *Hu,* who, therefore, must have been the chief God, to whom the sacred building was dedicated. And, as we have already seen that *Hu* was emphatically styled *Emperor of the Land and Seas,* the *world* was, properly speaking, his temple. Hence the fabric erected to his honour, is denominated *the Ark of the world,* alluding to the vessel in which he had presided over the *world of waters;* and the *circle of the world,* in reference both to the form of the building, and to the *circle* in which his luminous emblem, the sun, expatiated in the heavens.

With *Hu,* I find a goddess associated, in the Gododin,

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* Song 24.

by the name of *Kêd*—the *Ceto* of antiquity, whom Mr. Bryant and Mr. Faber pronounce to be no other than *Ceres* or *Isis.*

But let us look for these divinities under other names.

The Bard, when speaking of the same great temple, has the following remarkable passage,

" A structure was not formed, so eminently perfect, so
" great, so magnificent, for the strife of swords. In the place
" where *Morien* preserved the merited fire, it cannot be denied,
" that corpses were seen by the wearer of scaly mail, who
" was harnessed and armed with a piercing weapon, but co-
" vered with the skin of a beast. His sword resounded on
" the head of the chief singer of *Nöe* and *Eseye,* at the
" *great stone fence of their common sanctuary.*—Never more
" did the child of *Teithan* move." *

As the Bard has informed us, that this structure was sacred to the god *Hu,* and the goddess *Kêd*; and as he now tells us, that it was the common sanctuary of *Nöe* and *Eseye,* it must follow, that *Nöe* and *Eseye* were the same characters as *Hu* and *Kêd.*

Here, then, we have an express authority for the assertion, that *Hu* was, originally no other than the great patriarch. Not that I suppose the heathen Britons had actually preserved the name of *Noah;* but that our Bard, who lived in the latter part of the fifth, and beginning of the sixth century, had some knowledge of the sacred records, where he found the name and actions of Noah; and did not want sufficient sagacity to discover the absolute identity of Noah and *Hu*, in history and character. Thus we find the ground-work of this superstition expressly ascertained.

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* Song 15.

It may, therefore, be proper to examine a little further, the titles and attributes which this Bard assigns to the deified patriarch.

In the passage before us, we find *Morien preserving the merited fire.* Whether this is a title of the god or his priest, or of both, I leave others to determine. The name seems to be equivalent to *Janus Marinus.* In another place, the Bard ascribes the building of the temple to him. "This "hall would not have been made so impregnable, had not "*Morien* been equal to *Caradoc.*"—He was also its protector.—

"*Morien* defended the blessed sanctuary, the basis and "the chief place of distribution of the *source of energy*, of "the *most powerful* and the *most ancient.*"*

In the passage first cited, Hu is styled *Teithan*; for his chief singer is the child of *Teithan*: and this name seems to be no other than the *Titin* of the Hiberno-Celtæ, the *Tydain* of Taliesin and the Triads, and the *Titan* of antiquity—a known title of *the sun.*

With allusion to this divinity, Aneurin says—"And "now the *lofty leader*, Huan, (the sun) is about to ascend: the *sovereign most glorious*—the *lord of the British isle.*"†

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* Song 16.

† Ibid. 6.

It scarcely needs to be remarked, that *Huan* is a derivative of *Hu*, to whom the sovereignty of the British Isle is expressly attributed by Taliesin.

We have seen that the *ox* or *bull* is the appropriate attribute of *Hu*, and accordingly, Aneurin styles his chosen priest, the *radiant bull of battle.* This is, properly, a title of the god himself, and conferred, as usual, upon his minister. But the host who fought under the conduct of this priest, are denominated *Biw Beli bloeddvawr*, the *herd of the roaring Beli.** Hence it appears, that *Hu* and *Beli* constituted but one character. Yet the latter is certainly the Celtic god *Belinus*, mentioned by Ausonius, and expressly identified with Apollo, the solar divinity.

In allusion to the sun's progress in the ecliptic, Aneurin styles this god, the *lion of the greatest course.* He has also the name of *Bûdd*, *Victory*, and *Buddugre*, the "*god of* "*victory, the king who rises in light, and ascends the sky.*"†

Hu, or his mythological son, is called *Angor*, the producer of good, the *serpent* who pierces the sullen ones. *Angor* implies *undeviating:* and this Angor has the name of *Merin*, *Marine*, and is the son of *Mad-ien*, *Bonus Janus*, who is also called *Seithenin*, a little of Saturn, as I shall shew hereafter. Saturn and Janus are the same, and the character is referred by mythologists, to the patriarch Noah.

Again it is said of the chosen priest of Hu, "The placid "*Eidiol* felt the heat of the splendid *Grannawx*."‡ This title, as well as *Granwyn*, in the poems of Taliesin, is referable to *Apollo* or the *Sun* whose attributes are, therefore, ascribed to the British *Hu*.

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* Song 15.

† Ibid 22.

‡ Ibid. 25.

Upon the whole, it appears from this Bard, that *Hu* the *Mighty*, the Diluvian god of the heathen Britons, was no other than the patriarch Noah, deified by his apostate descendants, and regarded by a wild superstition, as some way connected with the sun, or symbolized by the great luminary of the material heavens. Hence the *bull*, the *lion*, the *serpent*, and other general emblems of the *Heliodæmoniac* worship, became his representatives upon earth.

But Taliesin is universally acknowledged by the Welsh, as the most profound teacher of their ancient superstition. This Bard avows himself of the order of the Druids, and expressly characterizes the mystical effusions of his muse, by the name of *Dawn y Derwyddon, Lore of the Druids.* It may, therefore, be of importance to our subject, to consider his representation of the character of *Hu*.

In the first place, then, I shall remark a few particulars, in an elegy which he composed on the death of a priest of *Hu*, whom he calls *Aeddon*, which I think, was a title of the god himself. This priest had presided in Mona, as appears from the opening of the poem.*

" Disturbed is the island of the praise of *Hu*, the island " of the severe remunerator; even MONA of the gene- " rous bowls, which animate vigour—the island whose " barrier is the Menai."

Mona was a well-known seat of the Druids. Many have regarded it as the great centre of their superstition. Yet this sacred spot, we find, was eminently dedicated to the honour of *Hu*, as the principal object of adoration. To this severe *remunerator* the island belonged; and here his votaries quaffed the generous bowl, in his sacred festivals: they must, therefore, have regarded him as the god who presided over drinking.

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* Appendix, No. 10.

Taliesin, one of the chief of his votaries, in the beginning of the sixth century, cannot be supposed to have devised, either the character or the honours of this god. What he has delivered to us, must have been what he learned from his predecessors in superstition; and *Hu* must have been the great god of Mona, in the earlier ages of Druidism.

It appears by the sequel of this poem, that the priest of Hu had the charge of a sacred *Ark*, and that *Aeddon*, that is, the god himself, had come from the land of Gwydion, (Hermes) into the strong island of Sëon, at the time of the deluge, and had brought his friends safe through that dreadful calamity. Here we have a curious mythological account of the flood, which shews, that the original history of *Hu* was purely Diluvian.

Hu, the lord of Mona, is again styled the severe inspector. He has the title of *Búddwas*, the *dispenser of good*, the *dragon chief*, the *proprietor*, and the *rightful claimant of Britain.*

The Bard then proceeds to recite the *long toil* of the *just ones*, upon the *sea which had no shore*, and their ultimate deliverance, as the reward of their integrity; where it is clearly intimated, that *Hu*, or *Aeddon*, was the leader of this righteous band.

In another poem,* Taliesin introduces this Diluvian god by the name of *Deon,* the distributer, who had bestowed upon him, as his chief priest and vicegerent, the *sovereignty of Britain.* In the age of our Bard, this could have been nothing more than conferring an empty title: but we may hence infer, that the chief Druid, during the high day of his authority, had claimed and exercised the power implied by this title; and that the god who invested him with this high privilege, was the chief object of his homage.

In this poem, the honours of *Hu* are connected with those of a goddess, named Kêd, or Ceridwen, of whom I shall say more hereafter.

We next find the *ox,* the attribute of *Hu,* stationed before a lake, at the time of a solemn procession: an *eagle,* another of his symbols, is carried aloft in the air, in the path of Granwyn, the pervading sovereign (the sun). This divinity is styled *Hëwr Eirian,* the *splendid mover.* The descriptions throughout this poem, are full of allusions to the deluge; and the draining of the generous bowl is eminently conspicuous amongst the rites of the sacred festival. †

Another poem mentions *Pen Annwvn,* the *ruler of the deep,* who is evidently the same as *Hu,* the *emperor of the seas.* This piece is full of the mythology of the deluge; and the Bard or Druid who violated his oath, after having drank out of the cauldron of this ruler of the deep, was doomed to destruction. ‡

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* Appendix, No. 1.

† Ibid. No. 2.

‡ Ibid. No. 3.

The poem called *Cadair Teyrn On*,* brings the solar divinity, or Celtic Apollo, upon the stage: and we find, by the extract which I have subjoined,† that he was actually worshipped under the *character of* FIRE. Yet this ardent god boasts, that he could protect his chair of presidency in the midst of a general deluge. He is, therefore, the same character as the Diluvian *Hu*, or the patriarch symbolized by the sun.

The divinity who presides in the sacred *ox-stall*, and is personified in the *bull*, *Becr Lled*, is styled the *supreme proprietor*, and has his sanctuary in an island surrounded by the tide.‡ *Supreme proprietor* is the title of Hu, and the *ox* or *bull* is his symbol.

In the former part of the poem, called the Elegy of *Uthr Pendragon*,§ that is, *wonderful supreme leader*, or *wonderful chief dragon*, this god is introduced in pageantry, and describes himself as the *god of war*, the *ætherial*, having the *rainbow* for his girdle. He is a protector in darkness, a ploughman, a defender of his sanctuary, and a vanquisher of giants. It is he who imparts to heroes a portion of his own prowess. He is an enchanter, and the president of *Haearndor*, the *vessel with the iron door*, which toiled to the top of the hill. He was yoked as an ox, he was patient in affliction—he became the *father of all the tribes of the earth*. He was a Bard and a musician.

Such are the impertinencies with which superstition con-

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* Appendix, No. 4.

† Ibid. No. 5.

‡ Ibid. No. 6.

§ Ibid. No. 11.

contaminated the history and character of the venerable patriarch.

In the second part of this poem, a sacrificing priest invokes this god with a prayer for the prosperity of Britain. He styles him *Hu,* with the expanded wings—*Father,* and *King* of *Bards—Father Dëon,* presiding in the *mundane circle of stones.*[*]

He is again named *Prydain*—the glancing *Hu*—the *sovereign* of *heaven*—the *gliding king*—the *dragon,* and the victorious *Beli,* Lord of the Honey Island, or Britain.

In the song called *Gwawd Llûdd y Mawr,* the *praise of the great leader,* the Bard professes to have derived his mystic lore from the traditions of the *distinguished Ogdoad,* by which he means the *Arkites,* or eight persons who had been preserved in the sacred ship. This piece contains the mythology of the deluge, together with some pretended vaticinations relating to subsequent times.

The chief of the Diluvians, and therefore *Hu* the *Mighty,* is styled *Cadwaladr,* the *supreme disposer of battle,* and described as a Druid. He is attended by a *spotted cow,* which procured blessings. *On a serene day she bellowed,* I suppose as a warning presage of the deluge; and afterwards, *she was boiled, or sacrificed, on May eve,* the season in which British mythology commemorated the egress from the ark. The *spot where she was sacrificed,* afforded rest to the deified patriarch, who is here styled *Yssadawr,* the *consumer* or *sacrificer.*

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[*] Appendix, No. 12.

The same personage has the name of *Gwarthmor, ruler of the sea, Menwyd* the *blessed,* and the *dragon ruler of the world.* He was the constructor of Kŷd, the *ark,* which passed the grievous waters, stored with *corn,* and was borne aloft *by serpents.*

Hence the symbolical *ape,* the stall of the *cow,* and the *mundane rampart,* or *circular temple,* are consecrated to the Diluvian god, and his vessel; and the season of their festive dance, is proclaimed by the *cuckoo.*

The Arkite god is called the father of *Kêd,* the *ark,* which is represented as an animal, I suppose Κητος, the whale, investing the Bard with the sovereignty of Britain. We have already seen this prerogative exercised by *Hu,* the Diluvian god: Kêd must therefore have acted in conjunction with the mystical father.

The same god is the *sovereign of boundless dominion,* in whose presence our priest trembles before the covering stone, in order to escape the *quagmire of hell.*

Another poem* styles this Diluvian god the *reaper,* in allusion to the patriarch's character as a husbandman. His priest has the name of *Aedd,* a title of the god himself. He had *died and lived alternately;* and it was his privilege to carry the *ivy branch,* with which, Dionysius says, the Britons covered themselves in celebrating the rites of Bacchus.

To the particulars here recited, the mythological reader, if he takes the pains to peruse the passages to which I refer, will be able to add many circumstances equally pertinent. But what I have here produced may suffice to shew, that our ancestors paid an idolatrous homage to a great patriarch, who had been preserved from a general deluge; that they regarded this deified mortal as symbolized by the sun, or in some manner identified with him; and that this compound divinity was regarded as their chief god.

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* Appendix, No. 13.

But as Cæsar has informed us, that the opinion of the Druids corresponded in the main with that of other nations, respecting the nature and attributes of the Gods, it will be asked, with which of the gods of antiquity is this helio-patriarchal divinity to be identified?

To those who have studied mythology only in a common school pantheon, in the works of Homer, or in the Latin poets, my answer to such a question may not prove perfectly satisfactory.

The mythology of the Britons was of a character somewhat more antique than that of the Greeks and Romans, as we find it in their best writers. The poets and sculptors of these nations refined upon Gentile superstition, and represented each of their gods with his own appropriate figure, and with a character elegantly distinct: whereas the old religion of the nations contemplated the objects of adoration as referable to one history, and represented them as grouped in one compound body, marking the various relations, operations, and attributes of their divinity, by a multitude of heads, arms, and ornaments, with which they graced their principal idol. Thus the Helio-Arkite god of the Britons comprehended, in his own person, most of the gods which pertained to their superstition.

Upon this subject, I shall produce the opinion of Mr. Bryant.

" The first writers," says this great mythologist, " were " the poets; and the mischief (of polytheism) began with " them: for they first infected tradition, and mixed it with " allegory and fable. The greatest abuses (says Anaxa- " goras, Legat.) of true knowledge came from them. I " insist, that we owe to Orpheus, Homer, and Hesiod, the " fictitious names and genealogies of the pagan dæmons, " whom they are pleased to call gods: and I can produce " Herodotus to witness what I assert. He informs us " (L. II. c. 53.) that Homer and Hesiod were about 400 " years before himself, and not more. These," says he, " were the persons who first framed the theogony of the " Greeks, and gave appellations to their deities, and *dis- " tinguished them, according to their several ranks and de- " partments. They*, at the same time, *described them under " different appearances:* for, till their time, *there was not in " Greece any representation of the gods, either in sculpture " or painting; nor any specimen of the statuary's art* exhi- " bited: no such substitutes were in those times thought " of."*

Again—" The blindness of the Greeks, in regard to " their own theology, and to that of the countries from " whence they borrowed, led them to multiply the terms " which they had received, and to make a *god out of every " title. But however they may have separated and distin- " guished them* under different personages, they are all " plainly resolvable into one deity, *the sun.* The same is " to be observed, as to the gods of the Romans."——

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* Analysis, V. I. p. 160.

" There was by no means, originally, that diversity of gods " which is imagined, as Sir John Marsham has very justly " observed. Neque enim tanta πολυϑεοτης Gentium, quanta " fuit Deorum πολυωνυμια."——" Pluto, amongst the best " theologists, was esteemed the same as Jupiter; and indeed " the same as every other deity."——" Porphyry (ap. " Euseb.) acknowledged, that *Vesta, Rhea, Ceres, Themis,* " *Priapus, Proserpine, Bacchus, Attis Adonis, Silenus,* and " the *Satyrs,* were all one and the same. Nobody had " examined the theology of the ancients more deeply than " Porphyry: he was a determined pagan: and his evidence " in this point is unexceptionable." *

To these passages I shall subjoin the following, from Mr. Faber. " *Osiris, Bacchus, Cronus, Pluto, Adonis,* and " *Hercules,* taken in one point of view, as will be shewn " at large hereafter, are all equally *the sun;* but if we examine their respective histories, and attentively consider " the actions which are ascribed to them, we shall be convinced, that in their human capacity, they can each be " no other than the *great patriarch.*" †

" If the several histories of the principal deities, revered " by most of the ancient nations, be considered, we shall " find them at once allusive to the *Sabian idolatry,* and to " the catastrophe of the deluge. Thus the account which " is given of Osiris and Isis, if taken in one point of view, " directs our attention to the sun and moon; but if in " another, it places immediately before our eyes the great " patriarch, and the vessel in which he was preserved. " Accordingly, we learn from Plutarch, that Osiris was a

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* Analysis, V. I. p. 307, 309, 310, 316.

† Mysteries of the Cabiri, V. I. p. 17.

"husbandman, a legislator, and a zealous advocate for the "worship of the gods; that *Typhon,* or the *sea,* con- "spired against him, and compelled him to enter into an "ark," &c.*

Such being the result of the most elaborate inquiries which have been made into the theology of the Gentiles, I may be allowed to assert, that the Helio-Arkite god of the Britons was a *Pantheos,* who, under his several titles and attributes, comprehended the group of superior gods, which the Greeks and other refined nations separated and arranged as distinct personages.

As *inventor* of the few *arts* with which the Druids were acquainted, and as the *conductor* of the primitive race to their respective settlements, he was their *Mercury.*

As the *solar* divinity, and god of *light,* he was their *Beli,* or *Apollo.*

As *King* of *Heaven,* he was their *Jupiter.*

As *supreme disposer of battle,* he was their *Mars:* and as *ruler of the waters,* he was their *Neptune.* And thus Cæsar might discover, in the superstition of the Druids, all the gods of his own pantheon, with their distinct attributes.

But as *giver of wine* and *generous liquor,* and as *president of festive carousals,* which is his favourite picture amongst the Bards, he was certainly that *Bacchus,* whose rites, according to Dyonisius, were duly celebrated in the British islands. Under this character, he appropriates the title of

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* Mysteries of the Cabiri, V. I. p. 151.

Hu, which is precisely the Ὑ-ας, or Ὑ-ης of antiquity, without the termination. His two great symbols, the *bull* and the *dragon*, so often introduced, come under the same point of view.

" I have observed," says Mr. Faber, " that Bacchus, or
" Dionusus, was one of the many titles of the Helio-
" Arkite Noah: accordingly, in his person, the two em-
" blems at present under consideration (the *bull* and the
" *dragon)* will be found to be eminently united. The
" Athenians, as we learn from *Arrian,* worshipped him as
" the son of Jupiter and Proserpine.—Jupiter, however,
" accomplished the rape of Proserpine, under the figure of
" a dragon; and Bacchus is universally described as bearing
" some resemblance to a *bull.* Hence we shall see the
" reason why, in the Bacchic mysteries, the *bull* was ce-
" lebrated as the parent of the *dragon,* and the *dragon* as
" the parent of the *bull.*

" The whole history, indeed, of Bacchus, is full of al-
" lusions to the symbols of the *bull* and the *serpent.*——
" Thus Euripides introduces a chorus of Bacchantes, in-
" viting him to appear in the shape of a *bull,* a *dragon,* or
" a *lion.*——And thus the author of the Orphic hymns
" styles him, *the deity with two horns, having the head of*
" *a bull, even Mars-Dionusus, reverenced in a double form,*
" *and adored, in conjunction with a beautiful star.*——For
" the same reason, Plutarch inquires, why the women of
" Elis were accustomed to invoke Bacchus, in the words of
" the following hymn:

" Come, hero Dionusus, to thy holy temple on the sea
" shore; come, heifer-footed deity, to thy sacrifice, and

"bring the graces in thy train! Hear us, O *bull*, worthy
"of our veneration: hear us, O *illustrious bull!*"

"After attempting to solve this question, in a variety of "different ways, he concludes with asking, whether the "title of *bull* might not be given to Bacchus, on account "of his being the *inventor* and *patron of agriculture*."*

It appears, then, that the *bull* and the *dragon* were symbols, eminently conspicuous in the worship and rites of Bacchus; and it may hence be presumed, that the very frequent introduction of them in the British Bards, alludes to the worship of their Helio-Arkite god, *considered in that character*.

To the British rites of this divinity, I think the tradition, respecting the oxen of Hu, drawing the Avanc out of the lake, has a marked reference. It will therefore be proper, in order to catch a glimpse of those rites, to consider the British mythology of *oxen*, *lakes*, and *islands, embosomed in lakes*.

Of all the objects of ancient superstition, there is none which has taken such hold of the populace of Wales, as the celebrated *oxen of Hu*. Their fame is still vigorous in every corner of the principality, as far, at least, as the Welsh language has maintained its ground. Few indeed pretend to tell us precisely, what the *Ychen Banawg* were, or what the *Avanc* was, which they drew out of the lake.

Mr. Owen explains *Banawg—prominent, conspicuous, notable.* And tradition tells us, that the oxen, which appropriated this epithet, were of an extraordinary size, and that they were subjected to the sacred yoke. I have also several reasons to suppose, that in Pagan Brîtain, some rites in commemoration of the deluge, and in which the agency of sacred oxen was employed, were periodically celebrated, on the borders of several lakes.

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* Myst. of the Cabiri, V. I. p. 190, &c. with the author's authorities.

In replying to a tale, which seems utterly impossible, we use an old adage, which says, *The Ychen Banawg cannot draw the Avanc out of deep waters.* This imports, that they *could* draw him out of waters of a *certain depth.* And popular and local traditions of such an atchievement, are current all over Wales. There is hardly a lake in the principality which is not asserted in the neighbourhood, to be that where this feat was performed. Such general traditions of the populace must have arisen from some ceremony, which was familiar to their ancestors. And this ceremony seems to have been performed with several heathenish rites. Mr. Owen tells us there is a strange piece of music, still known to a few persons, called *Cainc yr Ychain Banawg,* which was intended as an imitation of the lowing of the oxen, and the rattling of the chains, in drawing the Avanc out of the lake.*

The beasts which the Druids employed in this rite, were probably bulls of the finest breed which the country afforded, but distinguished, either by the size of their horns, or by some peculiar *mark,* and set apart for sacred use.

By *Avanc,* we generally understand the *beaver,* though in the present instance, tradition makes it an animal of pro-

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* Welsh Eng. Dict. V. *Banawg.*

digious bulk and force. In this druidical fable, the Avanc seems to be, ultimately referable to the patriarch himself, or to the ark, considered as his shrine, and supposed to have been extricated from the waters of the deluge, by the aid of the sacred oxen.

I once thought the story contained only a mythological allusion to the sacrifice of oxen offered by Noah, when he obtained a promise, *that the waters should no more return to cover the earth.* And this idea seems to be countenanced, by a passage of Taliesin, already cited, and importing, *that the diluvian patriarch found rest upon the spot, where the spotted cow was boiled or sacrificed.* But it appears, by the various notices respecting these oxen, and by general analogy, that our superstitious ancestors had some further allusions. Let us hear what is said of the animals, by mythologists.

Mr. Bryant was decidedly of opinion, that the *bulls* and *oxen* of mythology had constant reference to *Noah,* to the *ark,* or to the *history of the deluge.*

" It is said of the patriarch, after the deluge, that he " became an *husbandman.* This circumstance was reli- " giously recorded in all the ancient histories of Egypt. " An ox so useful in husbandry, was, I imagine upon this " account, made an *emblem of the patriarch.* Hence, upon " many pieces of ancient sculpture, are seen the ox's head, " with the Egyptian modius between his horns; and not " only so, but the *living animal* was in many places, *held* " *sacred, and revered as a deity.*"*

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* Analys. V. II. p. 417.

The author then proceeds to shew, that the sacred bulls, *Apis* and *Mnevis,* referred to the history of the same patriarch.

Again—“ Bulls were sacred to *Osiris* (who was Noah) the great husbandman. They were looked upon as living oracles, and real deities, and to be in a manner, animated by the soul of the personage, whom they represented.”*

“ Symbolical imagery, observes Mr. Faber, was very much in use among the ancients, and will be found to *provide* (q. pervade?) the whole of their heterogeneous mythology. A *heifer* seems to have been adopted, as perhaps, the most usual emblem of the ark, and a serpent as that of the sun; while the great patriarch himself was sometimes worshipped under the form of a *bull,* and sometimes, in consequence of his union with the sun, hieroglyphically described as a *serpent,* having the head of a *bull.*”†

And this superstition comes into contact with the Celtic nations, and is brought near to our British ancestors.

“ With regard to the devotion of the Hyperboreans, to the *arkite* mysteries, we are plainly informed by Dionysius, that the rites of Bacchus, or *Noah,* were duly celebrated in Britain. Hence arose their veneration for the *bull,* the *constant symbol of the deity of the ark.*

“ By this god, made of brass, says Dr. Borlase, the *Cimbri, Tentones,* and *Ambrones,* swore to observe the

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* Analys. V. II. p. 422.

† Myst. of the Cabiri, V. I. p. 177.

"articles of capitulation, granted to the Romans, who "defended the Adige against them. After their defeat, "Catulus ordered this bull to be carried to his own house, "there to remain, as the most glorious monument of his "victory. This god is ranked with *Jupiter*, *Esus*, and "*Vulcan*, being called *Tarvos Trigaranus*, from the *three* "*cranes* perching, one on his head, one on the middle of "his back, and the third on his hinder parts."*

I cannot help thinking, that the people who named this bull, spoke a language very similar to our Cambro-British: for *Tarw Trigaranus* is Welsh for a *bull with three cranes.* And the idol itself seems to be connected with British superstition, as I shall shew hereafter, that the chief priest, who attended the *arkite mysteries,* was styled *Garanhîr,* the *lofty crane.* Hence the *three cranes* may have represented three officiating priests.

We have already seen, that certain oxen or bulls, were assigned to *Hu,* the Diluvian god of the Britons, as his ministers or attendants.

I shall now examine whether there are any traces of evidence in the documents left us by our ancestors, that the god himself was venerated under the *form* of this animal.

And first of all, I shall consider a few notices, which are scattered in the mythological Triads.

We are here informed of *three primary oxen of Britain:* the first of which was, *Melyn Gwanwyn,* the *yellow ox of the spring;* the next was *Gwineu, Ych Gwlwlydd,* the *brown*

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* Myst. of the Cabiri, V. I. p. 210.—Antiq. of Cornwall, B. II. C. 16.

ox, which stopped the channel, and the third *Ych Brych, brâs ei benrhwy,* the *brindled ox with the thick headband.*[*]

The *yellow ox of the spring,* I make no doubt is the sign *Taurus,* into which the sun entered at the season when the Druids celebrated their great arkite mysteries. Mr. Faber has shewn, that the bull of the sphere, in general mythology, was the god of the ark.[†] And the mythology of Britain did not differ essentially from that of other nations.

The ox which *stopped the channel,* seems to have some reference to the oxen of *Hu,* which prevented the repetition of the deluge. Of the third notice, I shall have occasion to speak hereafter.[‡]

That the *oxen* and *bulls* of mythology implied the same thing, will be granted: and I find that the Triads mention three *bulls of battle.*[§] The first of them is styled *Cynvawr Cad Gaddug, mab Cynvyd Cynvydion:* that is, *the primordial great one, of the contest of mystery, son of the prior world, of former inhabitants.* This elaborate title, evidently points to that personage, who was *son of the antediluvians,* an inhabitant of the former world, and the *great patriarch of the new.* He was the *bull, Mars-Dionusus* of the Orphic poet. And, as the *great one* of *the mystery,* he was no other than the *Mighty Hu* of the Britons.—The introduction of *Cad Gaddug* into his title, brings forward his other great symbol. Prydydd Bychan, an eminent Bard of the thirteenth century, says—*Dragon gyrchiad Cad Gaddug.* The *dragon* repairs to the *battle of mystery.*

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[*] See W. Archaiology, V. II. p. 21 and 80.

[†] Myst. of the Cabiri, V. I. p. 206.

[‡] See Appendix, No. 3.

[§] W. Archaiol. V. II. p. 4. 72. 76.

If I am not mistaken, this *bull of battle* is recognized upon some of the ancient altars remaining in Britain. The Bards sometimes introduce *Mohyn* or *Möyn,* for *Tarw,* a *bull.*[*] Therefore *Möyn Cad* is synonymous with *Tarw Cad, bull of battle:* and Camden has copied two inscriptions, *Deo Mogonti Cad,* and *Deo Mouno Cad.*[†] It should appear from hence, that our bull of battle was publicly acknowledged as a god, in the ages when the Romans occupied Briton: and consequently, that the Helio-arkite god of the Britons was venerated, *under the title and form of a bull.*

The two other bulls of battle, mentioned in this Triad, are said to have been British princes, in the sixth century; but I must observe, that the priest of the god, or the prince who eminently patronizes his worship, is often dignified with one or other of his titles. Thus Aneurin styles the solar deity, *Beli Bloeddvawr,* the *loud roaring* Beli, that is, the *bull Beli,* and then calls his priest, *Taw Trîn, bull of battle.*

Again, the Triads speak of the three *bull sovereigns* of Britain,[‡] one of whom is named *Elmur mab Cadeir.* The *firm or established spirit, son of the Chair;* in another copy, the son of *Cibddar,* the *Mystic.* This seems to be a description of *Hu,* the god of mystery. The second, a mere duplicate of the same personage under a different title, is *Cynhaval mab Argat, prototype, son of the ark.* This can be no other than the *patriarch,* who issued from the ark, and presented the first specimen of man to the new world.

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[*] So Taliesin, Appendix, No. 2.

[†] Gibson's Camden Col. 1075.

[‡] W. Archaiol. V. II p. 4. 13. 76.

The third *bull sovereign* was *Avaon* or *Adaon,* son of *Taliesin;* but it appears, that *Avaon* is one of the cardinal points in the sun's course; and Taliesin, *radiant front* is a title of solar deity, though conferred on his chief priest.

The mythological bulls of Britain, whether *warriors* or *sovereigns,* still pertain to the Helio-arkite superstition. Let us consider their character, as *Dæmons.*

The three *bull dæmons* of Britain were *Ellyll Gwidawl,* the *dæmon of the whirling stream; Ellyll Llyr Merini,* the *dæmon of the flowing sea;* and *Ellyll Gurthmwl Wledig,* the dæmon of the *sovereign,* of the *equiponderate mass* (q. the earth ?)* All this seems referable to *him,* who was acknowledged as *emperor of the land and seas,* and worshipped as chief *dæmon god of pagan Britain.* And we are told, that of the three dæmons which were recognized in this island, the first was *Ellyll Banawg:* but this was the epethet of the *oxen of Hu.* To him, therefore, the symbolical *ox or bull* chiefly pertains. The other dæmons, in this Triad, are not said to have been in the form of this animal. One of them is called *Ellyll Ednyvedawg Drythyll,* the *dæmon of wanton animation,* and seems to allude to a symbol which disgraced, even paganism itself: the last was *Ellyll Malen,* the *dæmon Malen,* the *Minerva* or *Bollona* of Britain. †

In these notices we find the Helio-arkite god identified with an ox or bull, whether as the leader in battle, as supreme ruler of the land, or as the great object of dæmon worship. It may, therefore, be presumed that the Druids adored him in the image of a *bull;* or that they kept the living animal as his representative. But let us hear what the ancient Bards have said upon this subject.

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* W. Archaiol. V. II. p. 16.

† Ibid. V. II. p. 16, 17, 71.

That Aneurin calls the Helio-arkite god the *roaring beli,* and gives his priest the title of *bull of battle,* has been observed. So Taliesin, who, in the poem called Buarth Beirdd, the *Oxpen of the Bards,* or *Bardic stall of the ox,* professes to deliver the lore of his order, with superior accuracy, pronounces a kind of curse upon the pretended Bard, who was not acquainted with this *sacred stall.* This inclosure was situated in a small island, or rock, beyond the billows. The rock *displayed the countenance of him who receives the exile into his sanctuary,* that is, of the deified patriarch, who admitted his friends, banished from the old world, into his ark.

It was also the *rock of the supreme proprietor,* that is, of *Hu the Mighty,* who is repeatedly called the *supreme proprietor of the British islands,* and the *emperor of the land and seas:* and he was evidently the Bacchus of the Britons: for not to insist at present upon other proofs, we find his priests throughout this poem, hastening to the jolly carousal, and making a free indulgence in the mead feast, a principal rite in the worship of their god.

If then, the sanctuary of *Hu,* the Helio-arkite patriarch, and Bacchus of the Druids, was an *ox-stall,* it must be inferred, that the god presided in his temple, either in the image of a *bull,* or under the representation of the living animal.

Accordingly, we find the priest, *who gives the mead feast,* and introduces the votaries into the temple, making proclamation in the name of the sacred edifice, and of the god himself—"I am the cell—I am the opening chasm—I am "the *Bull, Becr-Lled.*" This title has no meaning in the British language. It seems to consist of two Hebrew terms, implying the *bull of flame.** And the idea, presented by such a derivation, perfectly harmonizes with the general tenor of British mythology.

For, as those oxen, which were merely the attendants and ministers of Hu, *roared in thunder*, and *blazed in lightning*, we must suppose that the supreme bull himself, had an essence still brighter, and displayed his form in the *solar fire.*

Hu was therefore worshipped in the form of a *bull.* But this bull, upon a great occasion, had submitted to the sacred yoke, and dragged the chain of affliction.

The patriarch god, who, amongst his other titles, is addressed by the name of *Hu,* thus speaks, by the mouth of his priest—"I was *subjected to the yoke,* for *my affliction;* "but commesurate was my confidence; the world had no "existence, *were it not for my progeny.*"†

Here it seems to be implied, that our mythologists regarded an *ox*, submitting to the yoke, as an apt symbol of the patriarch, in his afflicted state during the deluge. And this explains the meaning of the Bard, when he says of the Diluvian patriarch, "The heavy blue chain didst thou, "*O just man* endure; and for the spoils of the deep (the "ravages of the deluge) doleful is thy song."‡

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* בקר להט

† Appendix, No. 11.

‡ Ibid. No. 3.

In the same poem, the Bard says of certain persons, who were not admitted into the society of the patiarch, and into the mysteries of his own order—" They knew not on " what day the stroke would be given, nor what hour of " the splendid day Cwy (the agitated person) would be " born, or who prevented his going into the dales of Devwy " (the possession of the waters). They know not the *brin-" dled ox with the thick head-band, having seven score knobs " in his collar.*"

This *brindled ox* is the same tauriform god, whom the Triads mention as one of the primary oxen of Britain. A few lines lower down, we have a hint, that the Druids kept an *ox* as the representative of their god. The Bard says—" They know not what *animal it is,* which the silver-headed " ones (the hoary Druids) protect." This animal must have been the *brindled ox* mentioned in the preceding paragraph.

Indeed, the keeping of sacred oxen seems to have been essential to the establishment of these fanatical priests. Thus, Taliesin and Merddin are introduced, bewailing the destruction of their temples and idols in the sixth century.

" It was Maelgwn whom I saw, with piercing weapons: " before the *master of the fair ox-herd* (têr y vulu), his " household will not be silent. Before the two personages, " they land in the celestial circle—before the passing form " and the fixed form, over the pale white boundary. The " grey-stones they actually remove. Soon is *Elgan* (the " supremely fair) and his retinue discovered—for his slaugh-" ter, alas, how great the vengeance that ensued!" * This

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* See Appendix, No, 9.

Elgan, master of the fair herd, seems to have been the symbol of *Hu,* and he was a *living animal,* as appears from the fate which befel him.

Upon the whole, it appears that the Helio-arkite god was represented by a bull. I do not think, however, that he is to be identified with the *Ychain Banawg,* or oxen which he employed in drawing the avanc out of the lake. These animals were subjected to his control. It appears by a passage which I shall presently exhibit, that they were originally three in number; but that one of them failed in the office assigned to him and his companions, which was, to draw the *shrine or car* of their master in a sacred procession. To account for the selection of these animals for this use, it may be observed, that as mythology represented the god himself as a bull, it might be deemed meet, that he should have ministers of the same species. But the original and historical *Hu,* was no other than the patriarch Noah. So his *original* Ychain Banawg may have had human existence. And it may be conjectured that, in reality, they were the three sons of the patriarch, who attended upon him, with the title of אילפים, which implies both *leaders, princes,* and *oxen.* And tradition, whilst unsophisticated, may have reported, that they assisted their aged father in his debarkation.*

The oxen of Hu were concerned in the event of the deluge; therefore, connected with the Arkite mythology of the Britons. Yet popular tradition recites the following tale of them. One of these oxen overstrained himself, in drawing forth the avanc, so that his eyes started from their sockets, and he dropped down dead, as soon as the feat was achieved. The other, pining for the loss of his companion, refused food, and wandered about disconsolate, till he died in Cardiganshire, at a place which is called *Brevi,* that is, the *bellowing,* from the dismal moans of the sacred animal. Some such incident may have happened during the commemorative rites of the Britains; and the locality of the tale implies a probability, that this spot was sacred to the rites of *Hu,* and *his oxen.*

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* And hence may have arisen the fable of the אילפים drawing the shrine out of the water.

In this instance, as well as in many others, the early Christians selected the sanctuary of their heathen predecessors, for the place of a religious establishment. Perhaps this was done with the view of diverting the attention of the people from the objects of idolatrous superstition, which they had been used to contemplate in those places; but it had generally a contrary effect. *Dewi,* first Bishop of St. David's, founded a church and a religious seminary at *Brevi.* But so far was this from obliterating the memory of the old superstition, that the history of the Christian bishop seems to have been confounded with that of a heathen god; and the Bards transferred to him the mythological oxen of the votaries of Hu. Thus *Gwynvardd Brecheiniog,* a Bard who wrote in the former part of the twelfth century.

Deu ychen Dewi deu odidawc
Dodyssant hwy eu gwarr dan garr kynawc.
Deu ychen Dewi artcrchawc—oetynt.
Deu garn a gertynt yn gyd preinyawc:
I hebrwng anrec yn redegawc
Y Lasgwm, nyd oet trwm *tri* urtassawc.
Edewid Bangu gu gadwynawc;
A'r deu ereill ureisc y Vrycheinyawc.

Ban del gofyn arnam ny rybytwn ofnawc
Rac gormes kedeirn cad dybrunawc.
Ar Duw a Dewi deu niuerawc
Yd galwn bressen bresswyl uodawc.

"The two oxen of Dewi, two of distinguished honour, "*put their necks under the car of the lofty one.* The two "oxen of Dewi, majestic were they. With equal pace "they *moved to the festival.* When they hastened, in con- "ducting the sacred boon to *Glascwm* (the green valley), the "THREE *dignified ones* were not sluggish. The amiable "*Bangu* was left behind, bearing his chain; and the *two* "*others,* with their huge bulk, arrived in Brechinia. We "shall not be terrified for the intrusion of the *mighty ones,* "meritorious in battle. Let us call upon God and Dewi, "the two leaders of hosts, who, at this hour, willingly so- "journ amongst us."

Throughout this curious poem, which is of considerable length, the Bard intermixes a large proportion of mythological imagery and description, with the popish legends of Dewi. We need not, then, be surprised, that he assigns to his patron saint those celebrated oxen, which were the ascertained property of *Hu,* to whom all that is said in the passage before us must be referred. Here, then, we may remark the following particulars of the *Ychain Banawg.* They were, originally, *three* in number, but, by the failure of one, reduced to a pair. Their office, in the commemorative ceremony of the Britons, was to draw *the car of the lofty one,* or of *Hu,* the patriarch god, to whom the oxen were consecrated in solemn procession. And if this was the meaning of the memorial, the *avanc* of mythology, which the sacred oxen drew out of the lake, and which gave rise to the ceremony, must imply the *identical shrine,* or vehicle, which inclosed the *Diluvian patriarch.*

Such ceremonies were not peculiar to the Britons; and, perhaps, did not originate in these islands. Mr. Faber has proved, by just reasoning, that the Phœnician *Agruerus,* the patron of agriculture, was no other than the deified patriarch *Noah.* But, as the author observes—"Sancho-"niatho informs us, that his statue was greatly revered by "the Phœnicians, *that his shrine was drawn from place to "place by a yoke of oxen,* and that, amongst the Byblians, "he was esteemed even the greatest of gods!"*

Here we have the *avanc,* and the *Ychain Banawg* of *Hu Gadarn;* but the Phœnician historian does not tell us, that this shrine was drawn out of a lake, which was an essential circumstance in the mythology of the Britons. It may therefore be proper to consider their opinion concerning certain lakes, and the phænomena which they presented.

The Druids represented the deluge under the figure of a lake, called *Llyn Llion,* the waters of which burst forth, and overwhelmed the face of the whole earth. Hence they regarded a lake as the just symbol of the deluge. But the deluge itself was viewed, not merely as an instrument of punishment to destroy the wicked inhabitants of the globe, but also as a divine *lustration,* which washed away the *bane* of corruption, and purified the earth for the reception of the *just ones,* or of the deified patriarch and his family. Consequently, it was deemed peculiarly sacred, and communicated its distinguishing character to those lakes and bays, by which it was locally represented.

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* See Myst. of the Cabiri, V. I. p. 35, 43, 45, &c.

As a relict of this superstition of our ancestors, I may adduce the names of certain lakes amongst the Cambrian mountains; as, *Llyn Creini*, the *lake of adoration*, upon *Cevn Creini*, the *hill of adoration:* and *Llyn Urddyn*, the *lake of consecration*, in Meirionethshire; and *Llyn Gwydd Ior*, the *lake of the grove of Iôr, or God*, in Montgomeryshire.* Such names evidently imply, that some religious ideas were anciently connected with these lakes. And that this kind of superstition was prevalent amongst the ancient Druids, may be inferred from the testimony of Gildas, who informs us that they worshipped mountains and *rivers*.†

And, that the veneration for lakes was referable to the deluge, appears from the Welsh chronicles of *Walter de Mapes*, and *Geoffrey of Monmouth*. These writers, in the mass of their romance, involve a few genuine national traditions; which they would fain pass upon the world for sober history. Thus they introduce Arthur, as saying—" There " is a lake near the Severn, called *Llyn Llion*, which swal-" lows all the water that flows into it at the tide of flood, " without any visible increase: but at the tide of ebb, it " swells up like a mountain, and pours its waters over the " banks, so that whoever stands near it at this time, must " run the risk of being overwhelmed."‡

The Llyn Llion of these writers preserves the name of that mythological lake, which occasioned the deluge; of which it was, therefore, a local symbol. The peculiarity here assigned to it, may allude to some such natural phenomenon as the *Hygre*, or *Severn Boar;* a high and roaring surge, which leads the flood to the inland parts of the channel, whilst the river is actually ebbing in its æstuary. This circumstance the Druids may have remarked, and improved upon it, for the purposes of superstition.

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* See Camb. Reg. V. I. p. 302, 370.

† See Dr. Borlase's Antiq. of Cornwall, p. 110.

‡ W. Archaiol. V. II. p. 309.

The reference of the sacred lakes of the Britons to the deluge, is so clear in the mystical poems, that I need not cite particular passages. The reader is referred to the Appendix in general.

And not only the Britons, but the continental Celtæ also, are remarked in history for their superstitious veneration of lakes.

Strabo says, that the Gauls consecrated their gold in certain lakes; and adds, that lakes furnished them with their most inviolate sanctuaries. Μαλιϛα δ' αυτοις αι Λιμναι την ἁσυλιαν παρειχον. Here we must understand, *certain islets*, or rafts, inclosed within these lakes; as will be seen in the sequel.

We also learn from Justin, that in a time of public calamity, the priests of the Gauls, that is, the Druids, declared to the people, that they should not be free from the pestilential distemper which then raged among them, till they should have dipped the gold and silver, gotten by war and sacrilege, in the lake of Thoulouse.*

Hence the author of *Rel. des Gaules* supposes, that the Gauls of Thoulouse had no other temple than a sacred lake.

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* Lib. XXXII. c. 3.

The same author presents us with this curious account—

"Many persons resorted to a lake, at the foot of the "Gevaudan mountain, consecrated to the moon, under the "name of *Helanus*, and thither cast in, some, the human "habits, linen, cloth, and entire fleeces; others cast in "cheese, wax, bread, and other things, every one according "to his ability; then sacrificed animals, and feasted for "three days."*

This seems to be perfectly consonant with British superstition, in regard to the Diluvian lakes.

But the deluge overwhelmed the world, and this catastrophe was figured out in the traditional history of several of our sacred lakes.

The annotator upon Camden mentions the names of six lakes, in which ancient cities are reported to have been drowned.†

I could add several others to this list, but I observe, that tradition generally adds, that some person or small family escaped upon a piece of timber, or by other means.—Though I think it improbable that such submersions actually happened, I refer the tales in which they are reported, to those lessons which our ancestors learned from their heathen instructors, whilst inculcating the mythology of the deluge.

The principal lake mentioned by our author is *Llyn Sa-*

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* V. I. p. 114—128.

† Gibson's Camden Col. 706.

vaddan, in Brecknockshire. The old story of its formation is not totally forgotten. I recollect some of its incidents, as related by an old man in the town of Hay.

" The scite of the present lake was formerly occupied by " a large city; but the inhabitants were reported to be very " wicked. The king of the country sent his servant to ex-" amine into the truth of this rumour, adding a threat, that " in case it should prove to be well founded, he would de-" stroy the place, as an example to his other subjects. The " minister arrived at the town in the evening. All the in-" habitants were engaged in riotous festivity, and wallow-" ing in excess. Not one of them regarded the stranger, or " offered him the rites of hospitality. At last, he saw the " open door of a mean habitation, into which he entered. " The family had deserted it to repair to the scene of tumult, " all but one infant, who lay weeping in the cradle. The " royal favourite sat down by the side of this cradle, soothed " the little innocent, and was grieved at the thought, that " *he* must perish in the destruction of his abandoned neigh-" bours. In this situation the stranger passed the night; " and whilst he was diverting the child, he accidently " dropped his glove into the cradle. The next morning he " departed before it was light, to carry his melancholy " tidings to the king.

" He had but just left the town when he heard a noise " behind him, like a tremendous crack of thunder mixed " with dismal shrieks and lamentations. He stopped " to listen. Now it sounded like the dashing of waves: " and presently all was dead silence. He could not see " what had happened, as it was still dark, and he felt " no inclination to return into the city: so he pursued his " journey till sunrise. The morning was cold. He searched " for his gloves, and finding but one of them, he presently "recollected where he had left the other. These gloves "had been a present from his sovereign. He determined "to return for that which he had left behind. When he "was come near to the scite of the town, he observed with "surprize, that none of the buildings presented themselves "to his view, as on the preceding day. He proceeded a "few steps—The whole plain was covered with a lake. "Whilst he was gazing at this novel and terrific scene, he "remarked a little spot in the middle of the water: the wind "gently wafted it towards the bank where he stood; as it "drew near, he recognized the identical cradle in which he "had left his glove. His joy on receiving this pledge of "royal favour was only heightened by the discovery, that "the little object of his compassion had reached the shore "alive and unhurt. He carried the infant to the king, and "told his majesty, that this was all which he had been "able to save out of that wretched place."

This little narrative evidently contains the substance of one of those tales, which we call *Mabinogion*, that is, tales for the instruction of youth, in the principles of Bardic mythology. And it seems to have for its object, a local and impressive commemoration of the destruction of a profligate race, by the waters of the deluge.

Such traditions of the submersion of cities, in the lakes of the country, or of populous districts, by the intrusion of the sea, are current all over Wales. They were not unfrequent in other heathenish countries; and I observe, Mr. Faber uniformly refers them to the history of the deluge.

Thus "Phlegyas and his children, the Phlegyæ, were said "to have come from the land of *Minyas*, and in the pride "of their heart, to have quitted the city of the Orchome-

“nians or Arkites. This desertion from the Minyæ or *Noachidæ,* proved the cause of their destruction; for it was in reality, the separation of the antediluvian giants, or Titans, from the family of Noah. They refused to imitate the piety of that patriarch, and were consequently excluded from the ark by their own wickedness. Accordingly Nonnus represents them as being overwhelmed by Neptune, with the waters of the ocean.

> “ From its deep rooted base, the Phlegyan isle
> “ Stern Neptune shook, and plung'd beneath the waves,
> “ Its impious inhabitants.”*

“ I am persuaded, says our author, that the tradition of the sinking of the Phlegyan isle, is the very same as that of the sinking of the island Atlantis. They both appear to me to allude to one great event, the *sinking of the old world beneath the waters of the deluge,* or if we suppose the arch of the earth to have remained in its original position, the rising of the central waters above it.—The force of truth leads him (M. Baily) unguardedly to maintain, for he doubtless did not perceive the consequences of such a position, that the Atlantians were the same as the Titans and the giants; and he even cites an ancient tradition, preserved by Cosmas Indico-Pleustes, that Noah formerly inhabited the island Atlantis; but that, at the time of the deluge, he was carried in an ark to that continent, which has ever since been occupied by his posterity. These particulars unequivocally point out to us, the proper mode of explaining the history of the Atlantians.”†

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[*] See Myst. of the Cabiri, V. I. p. 327, with the author's authorities. Faber

[†] Ibid V. II. p. 283.

As a further elucidation of our prevalent traditions, of the submersion of cities and regions, I must take the liberty to transcribe the following curious passage.

" As the sinking of the Phlegyan isle, and the submersion " of the island Atlantis, equally relate to the events of the " flood; so the Chinese have preserved a precisely similar " tradition, respecting the preservation of the pious *Peiruun,* " and the fate of the island Maurigasima, the Atlantis of " the eastern world.

" Maurigasima, says Kœmpfer, was an island famous in " former ages, for the excellency and fruitfulness of its soil, " which afforded among the rest, a particular clay, exceedingly proper for the making of those vessels, which now go " by the name of Porcelain, or *China ware.* The inhabitants " very much enriched themselves by the manufacture; but " their increasing wealth gave birth to luxury and contempt " of religion, which incensed the gods to that degree, that " by an irrevocable decree, they determined to sink the " whole island. However, the then reigning king and sovereign of the island, whose name was *Peiruun,* being a " very virtuous and religious prince, no ways guilty of the " crimes of his subjects, this decree of the gods was revealed to him in a dream; wherein he was commanded, " as he valued the security of his person, to retire on board " his ships, and to flee from the island, as soon as he should " observe, that the faces of the two idols which stood at the " entry of the temple turned red. So pressing a danger, " impending over the heads of his subjects, and the signs " whereby they might know its approach, in order to save " their lives by a speedy flight, he caused forthwith to be " made public; but he was only ridiculed for his zeal and " care, and grew contemptible to his subjects. Some time

" after, a loose idle fellow, further to expose the king's superstitious fears, went one night, nobody observing him, " and painted the faces of both idols red. The next morning notice was given to the king, that the idols' faces " were red: upon which, little imagining it to be done by " such wicked hands, but looking upon it as a miraculous " event, and undoubted sign of the island's destruction " being now at hand; he went forthwith on board his ships " with his family, and all that would follow him; and with " crowded sails, hastened from the fatal shores, towards the " coasts of the province Foktsju, in China. After the " king's departure, the island sunk; and the scoffer, with " his accomplices, not apprehensive that their frolic would " be attended with so dangerous a consequence, were swallowed up by the waves, with all the unfaithful that remained in the island, and an immense quantity of porcelain ware.

" The king and his people got safe to China, where the " memory of his arrival is still celebrated by a yearly festival, on which the Chinese, particularly the inhabitants " of the southern maritime provinces, divert themselves on " the water, rowing up and down in their boats, as if they " were preparing for a flight, and sometimes crying with a " loud voice, *Peiruun,* which was the name of that prince. " The same festival hath been, by the Chinese, introduced into Japan; and is now celebrated there, chiefly " upon the western coasts of this empire."

" It is easy to see, continues Mr. Faber, that this tradition, respecting the island Maurigasima, is a mere adaptation of the fable of the Atlantis, to the manners and " habits of the Chinese. The same local appropriation " which fixed the one island in the western, fixed the other

"in the eastern ocean; and, while the Greeks and Phœni-
"cians worshipped the great solar patriarch, under the
"name of *Atlas;* the Chinese revered the common proge-
"nitor of mankind, under the title of *Peiruun,* or P'Arun'
"*the Arkite.*"*

To the same general conclusion, to which Mr, Faber is led by a view of universal mythology, I had arrived by the contemplation of British tradition. This coincidence furnishes a presumption, that we are both right, and that these local tales of people so widely separated in time and situation, must allude to some great event, in which the ancestors of all nations were concerned. This event could be no other than the deluge.

And as the tales of the submersion of towns and provinces, presented our rude ancestors with local commemorations of the destruction of mankind, by the deluge; so, on the other hand, we find the country full of tradition, which must be referred to the preservation of the patriarch and his family, through the midst of that awful calamity. To this class pertain the *rivers* which are represented as passing uncorrupted and unmixed through the waters of certain lakes. Let it suffice to mention two instances.

Camden, speaking of *Llyn Savaddan,* already described, says—

"*Lheweni,* a small river, having entered this lake, still
"retains its own colour, and as it were, *disdaining a mix-*

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* Myst. of the Cabiri, V. II. p. 289, from Kœmpfer's Japan, Appendix, p. 13.

"*ture*, is thought to carry out no more, nor other water, "than what it brought in."[*]

Again, "In the East part of the county (Meirioneth) "the river *Dee* springs from two fountains.—This river, "after a very short course, is said to pass entire and unmixed, through a large lake, called *Llyn Tegid*, in English, Pemble Mear—carrying out the same quantity of "water that it brought in."[†]

As the lakes themselves were symbols of the deluge, so these incorruptible rivers were the *stream of life*, which passed, whole and uninjured, through those destructive waters.

Here it is to be remarked, that the fountains of the Dee are distinguished by the names of *Dwyvawr*, and *Dwyvach*: and these are the very names of the mythological pair already mentioned, who were preserved in the sacred ship, when the lake burst forth and drowned the world. Hence it must be inferred, that these united and immaculate streams, were regarded as symbols of those distinguished personages. Such are the sacred rivers reported by *Gildas*, to have been worshipped by the Pagan Britons.

The honours of the Dee may be inferred, not only from the consecrated spots and temples which adorn its banks, but from its very names. It was called *Dyvrdwy, the divine water*; *Dyvrdonwy, the water conferring virtue or grace*;

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[*] Gibsons's Camden, Col. 706.

[†] Ibid. Col. 791.

and *Peryddon, a divine stream,* or, the *stream of the great causes or commanders.*[*]

The Dee was then worshipped as the image of the deified patriarch, and his supposed consort. Nor were even these conceits peculiar to our Celtic ancestors. Mr. Faber has shewn by a variety of arguments and deductions, that *Styx,* the river or lake of hell, like our British lakes, was a *personification of the flood.*[†]

" Accordingly, adds our author, the Sholiast upon Hesiod " declares, that Styx was the water which proceeded from " the *lowest parts* of the earth, and occasioned the phœnomenon of the rainbow." This passage brings to view the *great deep,* and the *sacred sign* given to Noah upon the subsiding of the deluge. Yet Homer records a tale of the *Titaresius,* a stream which flows forth from the Styx, precisely analogous to the British mythology of the *Dee.*

" Or where the pleasing Titaresius glides,
" And into Peneus, rolls his easy tides;
" Yet *o'er the silver surface, pure they flow,*
" *The sacred stream,* UNMIXED *with streams below,*
" Sacred and awful! from the dark abodes
" Styx pours them forth, the dreadful oath of gods."[‡]

This ænigma being precisely the same in Greece and Britain, it is probable, that if it were duly investigated, it would be found to admit of the same solution.

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[*] See Owen's Dict. V. *Donwy, Dyvrdwy, Perydd,* and *Peryddon.*

[†] Myst. of the Cabiri, V. I. p. 259, &c.

[‡] Iliad, B. II. Pope's translation.

But I must go on to consider another circumstance of tradition, connected with the lakes and bays of Britain; and by which our ancestors commemorated the vessel in which their deified patriarch overcame the deluge.

This vessel is denominated a *caer*, that is, a *fenced inclosure*, and the same *caer* is described as an island.* Hence the sanctuaries of the Druids, which were intended as representatives of this prototype, are often styled *caers* and *islands*, and were frequently constructed within small islands, which were considered as having once floated upon the surface of the water. And where these were wanting, our hierophants seem to have constructed a kind of rafts or floats, in imitation of such islands.

Thus the British Apollo, speaking through his priest, asks the names of the three *caers*, between the high and the low water mark, and boasts, that in case of a general deluge, he would preserve his seat of presidency safe and inviolate: intimating, that the sacred spot would mount on the surface of the waters.† Such is the representation which we have of the great sanctuary of *Sidi*.—

"The inundation will surround us, the chief priests of
"*Kêd:* yet complete is my chair, in Caer Sidi, neither dis-
"order nor age will oppress him that is within it.—Three
"loud strains, round the fire, will be sung before it, whilst
"the currents of the sea are round its borders, and the co-
"pious fountain is open from above."‡

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* Appendix, No. 3.

† Ibid. No. 4.

‡ Ibid. No. 1.

Taliesin describes his holy sanctuary as wandering about from place to place. He first mentions it, as being upon the *surface of the ocean:* the billows assail it, and with *speed* it removes before them. It now appears on the *wide lake,* as a *city not protected with walls; the sea surrounds it.* Again we perceive it *on the ninth wave,* and presently it is arrived within the gulph, or bend of the shore; there it lifts itself on high, and at last, fixes on the margin of the flood. After all, it appears that this *holy sanctuary* was nothing morethan the little island of *Dinbych,* in *Dyved,* or that insulated spot, upon which the town of *Tenby,* in Pembrokeshire, stands at present.*

What can all this mean, unless it be, that this was a sacred island of the Druids, and that it was congenial to their arkite mythology, to devise the fable, that it had once floated on the surface of the ocean?

In the mountains near Brecknock, there is a small lake, to which tradition assigns some of the properties of the fabulous *Avernus.* I recollect a Mabinogi, or mythological tale, respecting this piece of water, which seems to imply, that it had once a floating raft, for here is no island.

"In ancient times, it is said, a door in a rock near this "lake, was found open upon a certain day every year. "I think it was May day. Those who had the curiosity and "resolution to enter, were conducted by a secret passage, "which terminated in a small island, in the centre of the "lake. Here the visitors were surprized with the prospect "of a most enchanting garden, stored with the choicest

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* Appendix, No. 2.

" fruits and flowers, and inhabited by the *Tylwyth Tég*, or " *fair family*, a kind of fairies, whose beauty could be " equalled only by the courtesy and affability which they " exhibited *to those who pleased them*. They gathered fruit " and flowers for each of their guests, entertained them " with the most exquisite music, disclosed to them many " events of futurity, and invited them to stay, as long as " they should find their situation agreeable. But the " island was sacred, and nothing of its produce must be " carried away."

" The whole of this scene was invisible to those who " stood without the margin of the lake. Only an indis- " tinct mass was seen in the middle; and it was observed, " that no bird would fly over the water, and that a soft " strain of music, at times, breathed with rapturous sweet- " ness in the breeze of the mountain.

" It happened upon one of these annual visits, that a " sacrilegious wretch, when he was about to leave the gar- " den, put a flower, with which he had been presented, " into his pocket; but the theft boded him no good. As " soon as he had touched unhallowed ground, the flour va- " nished, and he lost his senses.

" Of this injury, the *fair family* took no notice at the " time. They dismissed their guests with their accustomed " courtesy, and the door was closed as usual. But their " resentment ran high. For though, as the tale goes, the " *Tylwyth Tég* and their garden undoubtedly occupy the " spot to this day—though the birds still keep at a re- " spectful distance from the lake, and some broken strains " of music are still heard at times, yet the door which led " to the island has never re-appeared; and, from the date

"of this sacrilegious act, the Cymry have been unfor-
"tunate."

It is added, that "Some time after this, an adventurous "person attempted to draw off the water, in order to dis- "cover its contents, when a terrific form arose from the "midst of the lake, commanding him to desist, or other- "wise he would drown the country."

I have endeavoured to render this tale tolerable, by compressing its language, without altering or adding to its circumstances. Its connection with British mythology may be inferred, from a passage of Taliesin, where he says, that the deluge was presaged by the Druid, who earnestly attended, in the æthereal temple of Geirionydd, to the songs that were chaunted by the *Gwyllion,* children of the evening, in the bosoms of lakes.*

The floating island of this lake was evidently an Arkite sanctuary.

Giraldus Cambrensis, speaking of the lakes amongst the mountains of Snowdon, mentions one which was remarkable for a wandering island, concerning which some traditional stories were related. Camden thinks this lake is to be recognized in "A small pond, called *Llyn y Dywarchen* "(i.e. *Lacus Cespitis),* from a little green moveable patch, "which is all the occasion of the fable of the wandering "island."†

This great antiquary was but little inquisitive, as to the nature and tendency of popular tradition; otherwise he would have recorded some curious particulars of the islands in the celebrated lake of *Lomond.* He only observes, that "It hath several islands in it, concerning which there are "many traditional stories amongst the ordinary sort of "people. As for the *floating island* here, I shall not call "the truth of it in question; for what should hinder a "body from swimming, that is dry and *hollow, like a pinnace,* and very light? And so Pliny tells us, that certain "green islands, covered with reeds and rushes, float up and "down in the lake of *Vadimon.*"*

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* Appendix, No. 12.

† Gibson's Camden Col. 797.

Pliny's description of the lake of *Vadimon* is minute and curious. Many incredible stories were told of it; but the following particulars, amongst others, he observed as an eye witness.

The lake is perfectly round, the banks even, regular, and of equal height; so that it appears as if scooped out, and formed by the hand of an artist. The water is of a bluish or greenish colour, it smells of sulphur, and has the quality of consolidating things that had been broken. There is no vessel upon this lake, *because it is sacred;* but it has several fertile, wandering islands, of equal height and lightness, and formed like the *keels* or *hulks of ships.*

The same lake sends forth a stream, which, after flowing a short space, is buried in a cave, and runs deep under the earth. If any thing is cast into this stream, before it enters the cave, it is carried forth to the place where it reappears.†

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* Gibson's Camden Col. 1217.

† Plin. L. VIII. Epist. 20.

As this lake of Vadimon, or *Vandimon*, with its floating islands, was *sacred*, there can be little doubt, that it was accommodated by art to the commemoration of Arkite superstition; and consecrated to the Etruscan *Janus*, whose name it bore. But this divinity, as we are informed by a very curious relic of Etruscan antiquity, was no other than the *Noah* of Scripture.

Magnus pater *Vandimon*, qui a Latinis *Janus*, a Syris *Noa* vocatur, advenit in hanc regionem (scil. Hetruriam) cum secundo filio *Japeto*, et illius filiis; et cum venissent super hunc montem, sibi commodum, posteris jucundum putavit. Quare, in superiori parte, quæ salubrior esset, civitatem ædificavit, et *Cethem* appellavit. †

The arrival of *Noah* in Italy, is probably as fabulous as the settlement of *Hu* in Britain; but gods and deified persons are generally represented as having *settled* in those places, where their worship was established. All I would infer from the testimony of Pliny, connected with this passage, is, that the Helio-arkite patriarch was commemorated in his sacred lakes and floating islands in Italy, as well as in Britain; and consequently, that the tales of the Britons, respecting such lakes and islands, are authentically derived from heathen mythology.

And such floating islands, or rafts, substituted for islands, seem to have been generally viewed as symbols of the ark.

Mr. Faber remarks, that " Herodotus mentions a deep " and broad lake, near Buto, in which, according to the " Egyptians, there was a floating island. On this island

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* Inghir. Apud. Annot. ad Lactant. de Fal. Rel. L. I. cap. 13.

" was a large temple, dedicated to *Apollo*, and furnished " with three altars. It was not supposed, however, to have " been always in a floating state, but to have lost its original firmness, in consequence of the following circumstance. When *Typhon*, or the ocean, was roaming " through the world, in quest of *Horus*, or Apollo, the " mythological son of *Osiris*, *Latona*, who was one of the " primitive eight gods, and who dwelt in the city Buto, " having received him in trust from Isis, concealed him " from the rage of that destructive monster in this sacred " island, which then first began to float."*——" As for " the floating island mentioned by Herodotus," continues Mr. Faber, " it was probably only a large raft, constructed " in imitation of the ark; while Horus, whose temple was " built upon it, was the same person as his supposed father " Osiris, or Noah, worshipped in conjunction with the " sun."

Again: " This mode of representing the ark by a floating island, was not exclusively confined to Egypt. As " Latona and Apollo were two of the great gods worshipped at Buto, so we find the same traditions prevalent " at Delos, both with respect to its having once been a " floating island, and to the various dangers by which " Latona was assailed."†

Delos, any more than our Dinbych, never wandered but in fable; and that, for the same reason, because it was consecrated to the Helio-arkite god; who, in his human capacity, had wandered upon the face of the deluge.

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* Myst. of the Cabiri, V. I. p. 61. From Herodot. L. II. c. 156.

† Ib. p. 64. See also the lake and floating island of Cotylê in Italy, p. 65, &c.

The same author adduces many more instances in the course of his work, and then remarks in general.—" All " these lakes contained small sacred islands, which seem to " have been considered as emblematical of the ark; whence " those in the lakes of Buto and Cotyle, were supposed to " have once floated."[*] Thus he solves the problem of *M.* " *Bailly*, who, noticing the extreme veneration of the ancients for islands, demands —[†] " Ne trouvez-vous pas, " Monsieur, quelque chose de singulier, dans cet amour " des anciens pour les îsles? Tout ce qu'il y a de sacré, de " grand, et d'antique s'y est passé: pourquoi les habitans " du continent ont-ils donné cet avantage aux îsles, sur le " continent même?"[‡]

But the sacred islands of the Druids are not always to be regarded as merely symbolical of the ark. I find that certain islands, and rocky promontories, whether in the sacred lakes, æstuaries of rivers, or bays of the sea, represented the mount upon which the deified patriarch landed, from the waters of the deluge.

This fact is particularly evident, in the story of *Gwyddnaw Garanhir, the lofty crane, priest of the ship,* a hierophant, whose office it was to conduct the noviciates through a scenic representation of the patriarch's adventures. To this end, he inclosed the persons to be initiated in coracles, covered with the skins of beasts, launched them from the

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[*] V. II. p. 429. n.

[†] " Does it not appear to you, Sir, that there is something singular in this " partiality of the ancients to *islands?* In these, whatever is sacred, great, or " ancient has constantly occurred, why have the inhabitants of the continent " given *islands* this advantage over the continent itself?"

[‡] Lettres sur l'Atlantide, p. 361.

shore in Cardigan bay, and, after they had weathered the mimic deluge, received them safe upon a reef of rocks, I suppose, *Sarn Badrig*, or *Patrick's Causeway*, which represented the landing-place of the patriarch.

In a curious poem, which I shall have occasion to insert in the next section, this scene is presented to view. The probationer standing upon the shore, and about to enter the mystic coracle, but observing that the waves were rough, and the rock at a considerable distance, exclaims—

"Though I love the sea beach, I dread the open sea; a "billow may come, undulating over the stone."

To this the hierophant replies—

"To the brave, to the magnanimous, to the amiable, to "the generous, who boldly embarks, the *landing-stone* of "the Bards will prove the *harbour of life:* it has asserted "the praise of HEILYN, the mysterious impeller of the "sky; and till the doom shall its symbol be continued."

As this scene was to typify the passage through the deluge, it is evident, that the *landing-stone* which terminated that passage, and proved a *harbour of life*, stood for the rock or mount upon which the patriarch arrived safe, from the midst of the waters; the same upon which he built the altar, and obtained the gracious promise, that the deluge should return no more. The Druids then regarded certain islands, or rocks, contiguous to the water, as symbols of this mount.

In this sense, I regard the *sacred rock* which inclosed the *stall of the ox**.—"Boldly swells the stream to its high "limit—let the *rock beyond the billow* be set in order at the "dawn, displaying the countenance of him who receives "the exile into his sanctuary—the *rock of the supreme pro-"prietor,* the *chief place of tranquillity.*" In the name of this rock, the mystic priest proclaims—"I am the cell, I "am the opening chasm—I am the place of re-animation!" This was then the *landing-stone,* the *harbour of life,* where the patriarch and his children were restored to *light* and *animation,* after having passed through the *symbolical death of the deluge.*

In allusion to this, the mystical Bard says—"Existing of "yore, in the great seas, from the time when the shout "was heard, we were put forth—whilst smiling at the side "of the *rock, Nêr* remained in calm tranquillity."†

Nêr was the *Nereus* of the Greeks and Romans, the great *abyss,* which was now retiring in calm serenity, when the patriarch and his family had reached the sacred rock.

To this mythology, the stories of the sacred islands in the lake of Lomond may have alluded. The Welsh romantic chronicles of the twelfth century inform us, that this lake receives sixty streams from the neighbouring hills, which it unites, and puts forth in the form of one river, named *Leven*—that it contains sixty islands, each of which has a *rock* or *petra,* with an eagle's nest on its top—that these eagles assemble annually at a central *petra,* on *May-*

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* Appendix, No. 6.

† Ibid. No. 7.

day, and by their concert of screams, vaticinate the fates of countries and kingdoms for the ensuing year.*

If, by these eagles, we understand fraternities of heathen priests, who often appear under that name, the story may have been authentically derived from the mythology of the country.

The island of Bardsea, so illustrious in Bardic and popish lore, seems to have been one of the *rocks of the supreme proprietor*, or places of *re-animation,* which commemorated the landing of the patriarch. Meilyr, a celebrated Bard of the twelfth century, says of it—

Ynys glan yglain
Gwrthrych dadwyrain
Ys cain iddi.

" The holy island of the *Glain* (adder-stone), to which
" pertains a splendid representation of re-exaltation.

I might extend my remarks to several other islands, as that of *Hu,* Iona or Icolmkil, where popish superstition adopted the prejudice of its pagan ancestor; and even to the name of the great hierophant, *Merddin Vardd,* which implies *priest of the sea-girt hill.* But as this appellation has something of an obsolete sound, it is familiarized to our countrymen, by making him the son of *Morvryn, mount in the sea.* In all this, the reader may perceive the predilection of our ancestors for certain small insular spots, whether embosomed in lakes, bays, or æstuaries of rivers. The same feature of superstition has presented itself to the researches of modern antiquaries. Thus Dr. Borlase remarks some huge remains of monuments, which are deemed Druidical, in the islets of Scilly, more particularly in *Trescaw,* which was anciently called *Inis Caw,* the *island of confederacy,* whence a graduate in the Druidical school was styled *Bardd Caw.*

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* W. Archaiol. V. II. p. 308.

It is not easy to determine with precision, which of our sacred islands symbolized the wandering ark, and which the stable mount, upon whose firm base the patriarch rested from his toils. But they had an intimate relation one to the other; and to some such sacred island, our mystical Bards refer the ultimate origin of their Diluvian lore.

In the poem called the *spoils of the deep,*[*] Taliesin treats of the deepest mysteries of his Arkite theology.

" Am I not contending," says the Bard, " for the fame " of that song which was four times reviewed in the qua-" drangular *Caer,* or sanctuary!—As the first sentence, was " it uttered from the cauldron, which began to be warmed " by the breath of the nine damsels. Is not this the caul-" dron of the *ruler of the deep!*" That is, the cauldron of *Hu,* the *emperor of the seas.* And again: " Am not I con-" tending for the honour of a song which deserves atten-" tion! In the quadrangular inclosure, in the island of the " strong door or barrier, the twilight and the pitchy dark-" ness are mixed together, whilst bright wine is the beve-" rage of the narrow circle!"

The cauldron here mentioned, as will be seen in the ensuing section, implies the whole system of Druidical lore;

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[*] Appendix, No. 3.

and we are here told, that the mythology of the deluge was the first of its mystical productions. This cauldron was attended and originally prepared by *nine damsels*, in a *quadrangular sanctuary, within a sacred island.* These damsels are commemorated in the monuments of Cornwall.

"On the downs, leading from Wadebridge to St. Columb, and about two miles distant from it, is a line of "stones, bearing N. E. and S. W. This monument is generally called *the nine maids*."[*] These maids, in whom the Diluvian lore originated, must be ultimately referred to the *Gwyllion*, certain *prophetesses* of mythology, who gave the first presage of the deluge, by their nightly songs, in the bosoms of lakes; that is, in their sacred islands.[†] From these fabulous models, a sisterhood of priestesses and pretended prophetesses seem to have been established early, and to have continued down to the sixth century.

Taliesin mentions four damsels, who attended to lament the death of the priest of *Hu*, or perhaps *the mystical death of the god himself.*[‡]

Gwyllion, the name of these damsels, is the plural of *Gwyll*, which, in its present acceptation, is a *night wanderer*, a *fairy*, a *witch*, &c. They are represented as children of the evening, probably because it was their office to celebrate certain nightly orgies.

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[*] Dr. Borlase's Antiq. of Cornwall, p. 189, and Pl. XVII. Fig. 1.

[†] Appendix, No. 12.

[‡] Ibid. No. 10.

But what was their *island with the strong door?* I think it must be recognized in the *Sëon with the strong door,* mentioned in the poem last cited. At this spot, *Hu,* or *Aeddon,* is fabled to have arrived at the time of the deluge, from the land of Gwydion.

That this was an island, appears from another mystical poem.* Taliesin, in his approach to it, goes to the *mouth of a river,* where he is met by *Mugnach,* the *mysterious,* the son of *Mydnaw, mover of the ship,* or of the *nine,* who presided as a sovereign in his sacred Caer, and was acknowledged as the teacher of liberality and honour, and the *giver of mead and wine* (these are the endowments of *Hu).* He invites the Bard to a *booth,* which the latter seems to avoid with dread and apprehension.

Sëon, however, was not properly the appellative of the island, but of certain mystical personages, who communicated their own name to it, and who seem to have been no other than the *Gwyllion,* or *prophetic maids* above mentioned. Like the muses of old, they were the patronesses of poetry and music. Taliesin says—

Ef cyrch cerddorion *Se* syberw *Sëon.*

" The tuneful tribe will resort to the magnificent *Se* of
" the *Sëon.*"†

There was some signal disaster attendant upon the fall of one of these ladies: hence the Bards use the simile, in illustrating a hopeless calamity. Thus—

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[*] Appendix, No. 8.

[†] W. Archaiol. p. 40.

Astrus chwedl ry chweiris i Gymry
Ystryw chwerw, nid chweriau ryle—
Ail yrth, ail syrth Se—
Ail diliw dilain draig erhy.

" A doleful tale to the Cymry, sports about—Of bitter " stratagem, not fair contention for superiority; like the " *concussion, like the fall of a* SE—like the *deluge* that " *afflicted the intrepid dragon.*"*

Druidism, then, is asserted to have originated in the sacred island of the *Sëon,* where the mysteries of *Hu,* the Helio-arkite god, considered in the character of Bacchus, were celebrated by *nine priestesses,* who had the title of *Gwyllion.* This brings our Bardic mythology again into contact with classical authority. For our *Sëon* corresponds with the *Sena,* and our *Gwyllion* with the *Gallicenæ* of Pomponius Mela.

" Sena," says that geographer, " situated in the British " sea, over against the land of the Osismii, is famous for " the oracle of a Gaulish deity, whose priestesses, devoted " to perpetual virginity, are said to be *nine in number.* They are called *Gallicenæ,* supposed to be of great " genius, and rare endowments; capable of *raising storms* " *by their incantations,* of *transforming themselves into what* " *animals they please,* of curing ailments, reckoned by " others beyond the reach of medicine; quick at discerning, and able to foretel what is to come; but easy of " address only to sailors, and to those who come into this " island on purpose to consult them."†

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* Gwalchmai W. Archaiol. p. 202.

† Lib. III. c. 8.

This spot must have been near the *Land's-end,* or amongst the Scilly islands; but as the different Celtic tribes had, probably, several *Caer Seons,* with establishments somewhat differing from each other, I find a *Sena* in the British seas, mentioned by Strabo, which in some particulars comes nearer to our Bardic mythology.

Men never landed here, but the women, passing over in ships, and having conversed with their husbands, returned again to the island, and to their charge, which was to worship Bacchus, the god to whom they were consecrated, with rites and sacrifices. Every year it was their custom to unroof their temple, and to renew the covering the same day, before sun-set, by the united labours of all the women; of whom, if any one dropped or lost the burden she was carrying, to complete the sacred work, she was torn in pieces by the rest, and the several limbs of this unhappy companion they carried round their temple, with rejoicings proper to the solemnities of Bacchus, until their fury abated. Of this cruel rite, Strabo says, there always happened some instance, whenever the annual solemnity of uncovering the temple was celebrated.*

The *Gallicenæ* of Mela were evidently priestesses of *Kêd* or *Ceridwen,* the mythological consort of the Arkite god; and to her, the singular qualities ascribed to them properly appertained. It will be seen in the ensuing section, that her knowledge and genius were very extraordinary. She was an enchantress—she could assume the form of whatsoever animal she pleased. She was eminently skilled in medicine, and both possessed herself, and could communicate to her priests, a view of all future events.

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* Lib. IV. See Dr. Borlase's Antiq. of Cornwall, p. 87.

Strabo's priestesses were immediately consecrated to *Hu*, the British Bacchus, whose *cell, quadrangular inclosure,* or *stall of the ox,* they covered annually with *branches.* The geographer's narrative fully illustrates the meaning of our Bards, when they allude to the *calamitous slip* of one of this sisterhood.

Agreeably to the Helio-arkite superstition, these personages exercised their sacred function in the bosoms of lakes or bays, which represented the deluge, and within the verge of consecrated islands, the symbols either of the floating ark, or of the spot upon which the patriarch disembarked.

As, then, the deified patriarch, or his representative, was supposed to have his usual residence in such situations, and as the office of the sacred oxen was to submit their necks to the car of the *lofty one,* we may perceive what is meant by that important rite, of drawing the avanc out of the lake. It could imply nothing more, than drawing the shrine of the Diluvian god from his symbolical ark, to the rock of debarkation, preparatory to his periodical visits to his temples and sanctuaries, upon firm ground; or investing him with the *empire of the recovered earth.*

The Bards supply many curious hints respecting the rites used upon this occasion.

The usual residence of this tauriform god, was in his consecrated *cell,* or *ox-stall,* on *a rock surrounded with the billows,* the *rock of the supreme proprietor, the chief place of tranquillity.* At a certain season, his festival commences with the adorning of the rock and the cell; then a solemn proclamation is issued, the bacchanals hasten to the jolly carousal, and, amongst other extravagances, *pierce* *their thighs,* so as to cause an effusion of blood.* This was at the season of May, or when the song of the Cuckoo convenes the appointed dance over the green.†

" Eminent is the virtue of the free course, when this
" dance is performed; loud is the horn of the lustrator,
" when the kine move in the evening."‡

And the dance is performed with solemn festivity about the lakes, round which and the sanctuary the priests move sideways, whilst the sanctuary is earnestly invoking the gliding king (the dragon, Bacchus), before whom the fair one retreats, upon the veil that covers the huge stones. This is also the time of libation, and of slaying the victim. §

This sanctuary is in the island which had floated on the wide lake, but was now fixed on the margin of the flood. Here the sacred ox, the *Ych Banawg,* is stationed before the lake, to draw the shrine through the shallow water to dry ground. There is the retinue of the god, there is the procession, there the eagle waves aloft in the air, marking the path of *Granwyn,* the solar deity, the pervading and invincible sovereign. ‖

Aneurin, as an eye witness, thus describes the solemnities of this ceremony, and an *accident,* or *mystical incident,* which attended its celebration.

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* Appendix, No. 6.

† Ibid. No. 12.

‡ Ibid. No. 4.

§ Ibid. No. 11.

‖ Ibid. No. 2.

"In the presence of the blessed ones, before the great "assembly, before the occupiers of the *holme* (the priests "of the sacred island), when the house (shrine of the god) "was recovered from the swamp (drawn out of the shallow "water) surrounded with crooked horns and crooked "swords, in honour of the mighty king of the plains, the "king of open countenance (Bacchus); I saw dark gore "(from the frantic gashes of the bacchanals) arising on "the stalks of plants, on the clasp of the chain (of the "oxen), on the bunches (ornaments of their collars), on "the sovereign (the god himself), on the bush and the "spear (the thyrsus). Ruddy was the sea beach, whilst "the *circular revolution* was performed by the attendants, "and the *white* bands, in graceful extravagance.

"The assembled train were dancing after the manner, "and singing in cadence, with garlands on their brows: "loud was the clattering of shields round the ancient *cauldron*, in frantic mirth; and lively was the countenance of "him who, in his prowess, had snatched over the ford that "involved ball, which casts its rays to a distance, the "splendid product of the *adder*, shot forth by serpents."

(This was a priest, who was fabled to have obtained the *Anguinum*, in the manner described by Pliny: the acquisition seems to have procured him the privilege of personifying the god.)

"But," continues the Bard, "wounded art thou, severely wounded, thou delight of princesses, thou who "lovedst the *living herd!* It was my earnest wish that thou "mightest live, thou of victorious energy! Ah, thou bull, "wrongfully oppressed, thy death I deplore—thou hast "been a friend to tranquillity! In view of the sea, in the

"front of assembled men, and near the pit of conflict, the
"raven has pierced thee in wrath."[*]

Whether the wounding of this *bull*, who represented the *taurine god*, was an *unforeseen accident*, or a customary *mystical incident*, I am not mythologist enough to ascertain. But, upon the whole, it may be asserted, that in the solemnities here described, the ancients may have perceived legitimate rites of the orgies of Bacchus; and we may conclude, that it was something of this kind that Strabo and Dionysius had in view, when they ascribed the worship of that god to the British islands.

The similarity of these rites with those of other heathens, might be proved in almost every particular; but I shall only produce three or four passages, as bearing generally upon the subject.

Sophocles thus invokes the Bacchus of the Greeks.[†]

"Immortal leader of the *maddening choir*,
"Whose torches blaze with unextinguish'd fire,
"Great son of Jove, who guid'st the tuneful throng,
"Thou who presid'st over the nightly song,
"Come, with thy *Naxian maids*, a festive train,
"Who, *wild with joy*, and raging o'er the plain,
"For thee the *dance prepare*, to thee *devote the strain*."[‡]

Here, as well as amongst the Britons, this god has his residence in a *small island*, *Naxos*, where he is attended by his *frantic priestesses,* and from whence he begins his progress, with the *nightly song* and *extravagant dance.* Another band of his priestesses welcome him to land at Elis, in the hymn recorded by Plutarch.—

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[*] Appendix, No. 14.

[†] Antig. V. 1162.

[‡] *Francklin's translation.*

> " Come, hero Dionusus, to thy temple on the *sea shore;* " come, heifer-footed deity, to thy sacrifice, and bring the " graces in thy train! Hear us, O *bull,* worthy of our " veneration; hear us, O *illustrious bull!*"[*]

The following passages of Euripides, preserved by Strabo,[†] represent the rites of this god much in the same manner as our British Bards, allowing for the homeliness of the Celtic muse.

" Happy the man who, crown'd with *ivy wreaths,*
" And brandishing his *thyrsus,*
" The mystic rites of Cuba understands,
" And worships mighty Dionusus.
" Haste, ye Bacchæ!
" Haste, bring our god, Sabazian Bromus,
" From Phrygia's mountains to the realms of Greece."

* * *

" On Ida's summit, with his mighty mother,
" Young Bacchus *leads the frantic train,*
" And through the echoing woods the *rattling timbrels*
" *sound.*"

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[*] Quæst. Græc. p. 299.

[†] Lib. X.

"Then the Curetes *clash'd their sounding arms,*
"And raised, *with joyful voice, the song*
"To Bacchus, ever young;
"While the shrill pipe
"Resounded to the praise of Cybelè,
"And the gay Satyrs *tripp'd in jocund dance,*
"*Such dance as Bacchus loves.*"*

These descriptions correspond with the rites of the British Bacchus; but the reader will, perhaps, inquire for the *mighty mother* of the god, who makes so conspicuous a figure in the Grecian Bard.

I have already mentioned, incidentally, a female character, as connected with the Helio-arkite god of the Britons. This goddess, who is, at one time, represented as the mother of that deity, and, at other times, as his *consort* or his *daughter*, participates in all his honours and prerogatives; so that, what is now attributed to the one, is again presently ascribed to the other. She comes under a variety of names, as *Kêd, Ceridwen, Llâd, Awen,* and many others; and she has a daughter, named *Creirwy* or *Llywy,* whose attributes are not easily distinguished from those of her mother. At present, I shall only touch upon a few particulars of this character, and note some of its analogies with general mythology, reserving what I have farther to say upon the subject to another section.

Kêd, or *Ceridwen,* presides in the same floating sanctuary which was sacred to the Arkite god.† She, as well as that god, is proprietor of the mystic cauldron.* In conjunction with *Hu*, she has the title of *ruler of the British tribes.* † Consequently, the privilege of investing the chief Bard, or priest, with the dominion of Britain, pertains to her, conjointly with the Arkite god. ‡.

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* Mr. Faber's translation Myst. of the Cabiri, V. II. p. 329.

† Appendix, No. 1 and 4.

In order to discover what is meant by this character, it may be remarked, that her symbol, or distinguishing attribute, was a sacred *boat.* § And she is even identified with the boat, or vessel, which was fabricated by the Diluvian patriarch. "Let truth be ascribed to *Menwyd*, the dragon "chief of the world, who formed the curvatures of *Kŷd* "(the ark), which passed the dale of grievous waters, having the fore part stored with *corn*, and mounted aloft, "with the connected serpents."‖ Hence she is represented in this poem, as the *daughter* of that god. "Then shall "the great ones be broken: they shall have their feeble "wanderings beyond the effusion (deluge) of the father of "Kêd." And as the deified patriarch was symbolized by the sun, so the goddess of the *boat* and the cauldron was venerated in conjunction with the moon.¶

Hence it appears, that this goddess, by whatever name she was distinguished, may be regarded as a personification of the ark; or else as an imaginary genius, supposed to preside over that sacred vessel; and therefore connected with the Arkite god, and dignified, like him, with a celestial symbol.

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* Ibid. No. 1, 2, and 4, and Gododin, *Song* 24.

† Gododin, Song 25.

‡ Compare Appendix, No. 1 and 12.

§ Ibid. No. 9.

‖ Ibid. No. 12.

¶ See Cadair Taliesin in the ensuing section.

But the god *Hu* was represented by a *bull*, and presided in his sacred stall. It is also probable, that the female deity was sometimes viewed under the emblem of a *cow*, and had animals of this species set apart for the sacred office of drawing her shrine.

The Triads mention three mythological *cows*, one of which, I suppose, was the symbol of this goddess, whilst the other two were devoted to her service.* And in the poem of the *Ogdoad*,† we find the *spotted cow*, which at the era of the flood procured a blessing. On the serene day (before the commencement of the storm) she bellowed: on the eve of May she was boiled (tossed about by the deluge), and on the spot where her boiling was completed, the *Diluvian patriarch found rest*. Great must have been the honours conferred upon this *cow*, when the preservation of her sacred stall was deemed of such importance, that, *without* it, *the world would become desolate, not requiring the song of the cuckoo to convene the appointed dance over the green.* The cow being the symbol of this goddess, furnishes a probable reason why that island, in which her worship eminently prevailed, was called *Ynys Môn*, the *island of the cow.*

Such fantastical commemorations of that sacred ark, in which the Divine Providence saved an expiring world, were not peculiar to the pagan Britons.

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* W. Archaiol. Vol. II. p. 22.

† Appendix, No. 12.

"The various goddesses of paganism," says Mr. Faber, "seem to be *all one* and the same mythological character; "though they sometimes represent the *moon*, sometime "the *ark*, and sometimes the globe of the *earth*, emerging "from the waters of the deluge."[*]

Again—"Most, indeed, of the ancient goddesses are so far "the same, that their several mythological histories appear "almost universally to relate, partly to the catastrophe of "the deluge, and partly to the worship of the heavenly "bodies. The *world*, rising from the midst of the waters, "the *ark*, wandering over their surface, and upon the "introduction of Sabianism, the *lunar crescent*, seem to be "alike described in the diversified characters of all and "each of them. Their names, moreover, are perpetually "interchanged, so that one goddess is not uniformly a personification of the *ark*, another of the *moon*, and a third "of the *earth*; but, on the contrary, all these various objects of worship are frequently symbolized, upon different "occasions, by one and the same deity. Thus *Venus*, *Derceto*, *Isis*, *Ceres*, *Proserpine*, and *Latona*, are severally "and equally the *moon*, the renovated *globe*, and the *ark* "of Noah."[†]

The same author remarks, that the deified *ark* was sometimes considered as the *mother*, sometimes as the *daughter*, and sometimes as the *consort* of its builder:[‡] and that a *cow*, or heifer, was the most usual emblem of the ark.[§]

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[*] Mysteries of the Cabiri, V. I. p. 17.

[†] Ibid. p. 138.

[‡] Ibid. p. 182.

[§] Ibid. p. 177, &c.

Mr. Faber also takes notice of a rite mentioned by Tacitus, as prevalent amongst the Germans (the neighbours of our Celts), "In which we behold the great goddess con-
" nected, as in the mysteries of Egypt (and Britain), with
" the *small lake,* the *consecrated island,* and the *symbolical*
" *ox.*"

" In an *island* in the ocean (says the historian) is a *sacred*
" *grove,* and in it a *chariot,* covered with a *garment* (the
" *Llen* of our Bards), which the priest alone can lawfully
" touch. At particular seasons, the goddess is supposed
" to be present in this sanctuary; she is then *drawn in her*
" *car* by *heifers,* with much reverence, and followed by the
" priests. During this period, *unbounded festivity prevails,*
" and all wars are at an end, till the priest restores the
" deity to the temple, satiated with the conversation of
" mortals. Immediately the chariot, the garments, and
" even the goddess herself, are plunged beneath the waters
" of a *secret lake.*"

Upon this passage, our author observes, that this portable shrine, drawn by oxen, was one of the same nature as that of *Agruerus* or *Noah,* mentioned by Sanchoniatho; and that it is not improbable, that the mode which the Philistines adopted, of sending home the ark of God, was borrowed from this very superstition. Willing to pay it all possible honour, they conveyed it, like the shrine of the great Phœnician deity, Agruerus, in a *cart* drawn by *cows.*

" Now, therefore, make a new cart, and take two milch
" kine, on which there hath come no yoke, and tie the
" kine to the cart, and bring their calves home from them;
" and take the ark of the Lord, and lay it upon the cart;
" and put the jewels of gold, which ye return him for a

" trespass offering, in a coffer by the side thereof; and send " it away, that it may go."*

Thus it appears, that the symbols and rites by which our ancestors commemorated the patriarch and his sacred vessel, had a close analogy with the superstition of the ancient Gentiles.

And now, having ascertained these facts, let me take a brief retrospect of the ground over which I have gone.

In the course of the present section, I have produced a mass of evidence, that the mythology and rites of the Druids have a reference to the history of the deluge, combined with *Sabian* idolatry: that this people had preserved many heathen traditions respecting the deluge; that they recognized the character of the patriarch *Noah*, whom they worshipped as a god, in conjunction with the sun; that this *Helio-arkite* deity was their *chief god*, appropriating the attributes of most of the principal gods of the Gentiles, but more particularly corresponding in character *with Bacchus;* that his symbols and titles point out his identity with this deity; that the rites by which he was honoured, were connected with the superstitious veneration of certain sacred *lakes*, *rivers*, *islands*, and *rocks;* that these rites were appropriate to the orgies of Bacchus; that the worship of this god was connected with that of a goddess, who represented the ark; and that all this corresponds, as history requires it should correspond, with the general superstition of other nations, and is therefore derived from the same source.

We are, indeed, furnished with several hints, some of

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† Myst. of the Cabiri, V. I. p. 213,

which I shall produce in the sequel, that the *worship of the sun* was an adventitious branch, grafted at some remote period into the religion of our ancestors. But as for the Arkite superstion, and the idolatrous veneration of the great patriarch, we have seen, that the country of the Cambro-Britons, even in the present age, is full of traditions, which must be referred, exclusively, to certain local and national commemorations of the deluge. And the same traditions are recognized by the poets of the middle ages, who add a strong confirmation to them, by the positive assertion, that the patriarch who survived the deluge, had been acknowledged as a *great god* by the ancient Bards, or *Druids* of Britain.

It also appears, that the mythological Triads, which we regard as the most venerable memorials of our progenitors, describe *Hu*, the great deified patriarch and legislator, with certain characteristical traits, which can only be verified in the history of Noah.

And that *Aneurin*, the contemporary of *Hengist*, and *Taliesin*, the president of the Bards in the sixth century; that great repository of tradition, which *was ancient in his days;* that bigot to the religion of his forefathers, which he was not ashamed openly to profess, acknowledged the same *Hu* as the *mystical ruler of Britain*, and as the *god of ancient Mona*, the accredited seat of the Druids. In that consecrated spot, this Diluvian god had no avowed superior; for *Mona was the island of the praise of Hu*—the *island of Hu, the severe remunerator.*

This could have been no new superstition in the days of Taliesin. For the fabrication of such an idolatrous system by that Bard, no adequate motives can be assigned. Such a fabrication, if attempted, could not have been rendered permanent and national; nor would the learning of his age have carried him through the task of devising a system, which could tally with the remotest traditions of the heathen nations, and with the elucidation of those traditions by the best scholars of our own times, in so many minute particulars. What Taliesin has given us is, then, the genuine opinion of the Druids of the sixth century, respecting the religion of their remote predecessors: and we have sufficient reason to conclude, that the chain which connected them with those predecessors, was neither slack nor feeble.

It is, then, a certain fact, that the Druids did pay an idolatrous homage to the patriarch Noah, and to the *vessel* which carried him safe through the waters of the deluge. In this superstition, they had *almost* lost sight of the *one supreme God*, whose providence alone had protected the righteous man, and his tottering ark.

And I cannot account for their ascending thus high in their traditions, and there stopping at once; nor for their retaining just ideas of the patriarchal character, viewed as a man, in the midst of the grossest superstition and errors, without supposing that their ancestors, at some period of their history, had respected the righteous laws of Noah, and professed his pure religion, notwithstanding the depth to which they had fallen in the course of ages.

However this may have been, I shall keep hold of the facts developed in this section, and apply them as a clue, in tracing out some of the hidden recesses of this ancient superstition.

SECTION III.

The Character, Connexions, and mystical Rites of Kêd, or Ceridwen, the Arkite Goddess of the Druids. Her Identity with the Ceres of Antiquity.

THE detection of those divine honours, which the British sage awarded to the patriarch Noah, under whatever title; the magnificent mention of the *ship* of *Nevydd;* and the commemorations of the deluge upon the borders of the lakes of Cambria, encourage me to search for some farther vestiges of that kind of superstition, and of those mystic rites, which Mr. Bryant terms *Arkite;* which he considers at large in the second volume of his *Analysis;* and which he finds widely diffused over the Gentile world.

According to this very eminent writer, *all the mysteries of the heathen nations seem to have been memorials of the deluge, and of the events which immediately succeeded.* He remarks, that those mysteries consisted, for the most part, of a melancholy process, and were celebrated by night with torches, in commemoration of that state of darkness, in which the patriarch and his family had been involved.*

To be more particular; he remarks, that in these mystic rites, the ark of Noah was an object of superstitious veneration, over which a divinity was represented as presiding; and that this character was known by the several names of *Selene, Isis, Ceres, Rhea, Vesta, Cybele, Archia, Niobe,* and *Melissa,* which were the same: these being only titles, by which that female personage was described, who was supposed to be the genius of the ark, and the mother of mankind.*

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* Analysis V. II. p. 331.

And as this personage was the genius of the ark, so our author takes notice, that the celebration of her mysteries in the British islands, stands upon ancient record. Having quoted the authority of Artemidorus upon this subject, Mr. Bryant thus declares his own opinion.—"I make no doubt, "but that this history was true, and that the *Arkite rites* "prevailed in many parts of Britain."†

Holding in my hand the clue presented to me in the preceding section of this Essay, and walking in the shade of this giant of erudition, who clears the way before me, I shall now proceed to the Druidical precinct, in search of the British *Ceres:* and I think I distinguish her character and history in the celebrated goddess *Kêd,* or *Ceridwen,* whom I have already remarked in close connection with the Arkite god.

Mr. Owen, in his Cambrian Biography, describes Ceridwen as "A female personage, in the mythology of the "Britons, considered as the *first of womankind,* having "nearly the same attributes with Venus, in whom are per- "sonified the generative powers."

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* Analysis, V. II. p. 268.

† Ibid. p. 473.

In this description, she is evidently acknowledged as the *great mother:* and Mr. Bryant says of *Ceres,* that she was named *da mater,* or *the mother,* because she was esteemed (as representative of the ark) the common parent, the *mother* of all mankind.*

In the introductory section of this Essay, I quoted several passages from those Bards who lived under the Welsh princes, in which Ceridwen is mentioned. They uniformly represent this character, as having pertained to the superstition of the primitive Bards, or *Druids.* They describe her, as having presided over the most hidden mysteries of that ancient superstition; and as a personage, from whom alone the secrets of their fanatical priesthood were to be obtained in purity and perfection. They also intimate, that it was requisite for those who aspired to the chair of presidency, to have tasted the waters of inspiration from her sacred cauldron, or, in other words, to have been initiated into her mysteries.

All this clearly points towards some solemn rites of our remote progenitors: and, for such rites, we can find no parallel amongst the heathen priesthood of other nations, if we except the celebrated mysteries of *Ceres, Isis,* or *Cybele,* all which names Mr. Bryant refers to the same history and character.

But it may be asked, if Ceridwen has the attributes of *Venus,* why should I labour to connect her more particularly with the character of *Ceres?*

I must observe, in reply, that this station seems to be pointed out for her by the most obvious mythological analogy. The most familiar idea which was entertained of Ceres, presented her as the goddess of *corn*; as having introduced the art of tillage, and taught mankind to sow the land, and cultivate the various species of grain.

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* Analysis V. II. p. 338.

The reader may recollect a passage of *Cuhelyn*, a Bard of he sixth or eighth century, which I have already quoted, and which delineates the character of Ceridwen by one impressive epithet—she is styled *Ogyrven Amhad, the goddess of various seeds*. Thus Ceres and Ceridwen unite by a single touch. And our British Ceres, agreeably to Mr. Bryant's observation, was the *genius of the ark*. Her attribute was a *boat*, and she was even identified with that vessel, which was formed by the Diluvian patriarch; which carried its store of *corn* over the grievous waters, and, like the car of Ceres, mounted aloft with its harnessed serpents.*

The history and character of Ceridwen are exhibited in a very curious mythological tale, called *Hanes Taliesin*, the *History of Taliesin*. It is prefixed to the works of that Bard, and has been supposed to contain some romantic account of his birth; but, in reality, it has nothing to do with the history of a private individual, or with romance, in the common acceptation of that term. It is a mythological allegory, upon the subject of initiation into the mystical rites of Ceridwen. And though the reader of cultivated taste may be offended at its seeming extravagance, I cannot but esteem it one of the most precious morsels of British antiquity, which is now extant.

Before I exhibit the tale itself, it may be proper to obviate an objection to the era of the incidents which it recites. Ceridwen is represented as living in the time of *Arthur.* Hence it may be argued, that she could neither have been the *great mother,* nor have belonged at all to the ancient superstition of the Druids.

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* See the conclusion of Sect. II. and the poems there quoted.

But the *Arthur* here introduced, is a traditional character, totally distinct from the prince who assumed that name in the beginning of the sixth century.

He is placed, as Mr. Owen remarks, high in the mythological ages, and far beyond the reach of authentic, profane history. The *great bear* is his representative in the heavens, and the constellation, *Lyra,* is his harp. He is the son of *Uthyr Bendragon,* the *wonderful supreme leader,* and *Eigyr,* the *generative power.* His adventures, as related in the mythological tales, had evidently, according to my author, a common origin with those of Hercules, the Argonauts, &c.

Mr. Owen, with some hesitation, refers this character to the history of Nimrod.* I rather think that *Arthur* was one of the titles of the deified patriarch *Noah.* And with this idea, the account which we have of him in the Bards and the Triads, perfectly accord.

He is represented as having had three wives, the daughters of mythological personages: each of these wives had the name of *Gwenhwyvar,*† that is, the *lady of the summit of the water.* These three wives of Arthur are only so many copies of the same mystical character, the import of which may be perceived in the construction of the name.

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* Cam. Biog. V. *Arthur.*

† Gwen-wy-var: the H in this word is merely formative.

And as for Arthur himself, Taliesin's *Spoils of the Deep,*[*] a poem which treats wholly of Diluvian mythology, represents this prince as presiding in the *ship* which brought himself, and *seven* friends, safe to land, when that *deep* swallowed up the rest of the human race. This has no connection with the history of the sixth century. It relates entirely to the deluge; and the personage here commemorated, was the same as his mystical parent, *Uthyr Pendragon,* or the deified patriarch *Noah.*

It appears from Taliesin, that Ceridwen also was esteemed a character of the most remote antiquity: for the Bard places the origin of her mysteries very remote in the primitive ages.

Cyvarchav i'm Rhên
Ystyriaw Awen
Py ddyddwg Anghen
Cyn no Cheridwen!
Cyssevin ym Myd
A vu ei Sywyd.

"I implore my sovereign, to consider the inspiring muse "(a title of this goddess)—what did *necessity* produce, "more early than Ceridwen! The primary order in the "world was that of her priests."

These mystical characters, it must be acknowledged, were still regarded as existing in the sixth century; and so they would have been to this day, had they been still personified in their priests, and had the superstition which upheld them continued to prevail.*

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[*] Appendix, No. 3.

[†] Taliesin's Mabgyvren, or Elements. W. Archaiol. p. 24.

To this short defence of the antiquity of the British mysteries, or rather of the characters to which they were consecrated, I must add, that I have thought it convenient to divide the story of *Hanes Taliesin* into chapters, in order to place the long annotations which it may require, as near as possible to the subject from which they arise. I have also translated the names of men and places: for this I need but little apology. Though many of these names occur in history, yet in the present, and in similar cases, they are evidently selected for the purpose of carrying on the allegory, without wholly removing the mystic veil: their import, therefore, ought to be known to the reader.

HANES TALIESIN.—CHAP. I.

" In former times, there was a man of noble descent in " *Penllyn*, the *end of the lake.* His name was *Tegid Voel*, " *bald serenity*, and his paternal estate was in the middle of " the *lake of Tegid*, or *Pemble meer.*

" His espoused wife was named Ceridwen. By this wife " he had a son, named *Morvran ap Tegid, raven of the sea*, " the *son of serenity*, and a daughter called *Creirvyw*,† the

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* Thus Ceridwen still exists in the middle of the *twelfth* century. See the poems of Hywel, in the conclusion of this section.

† In other passages, this name is written *Creirwy*, the *token of the egg.*

" *sacred token of life.* She was the most beautiful damsel
" in the world

" But these children had a brother, named *Avagddu,*
" *utter darkness,* or *black accumulation,* the most hideous
" of beings. Ceridwen, the mother of this deformed son,
" concluded in her mind, that he would have but little
" chance of being admitted into respectable company, un-
" less he were endowed with some honourable accomplish-
" ments, or sciences; for this was in the first period of
" Arthur, and the round table."

This opening of the tale carries us at once into mythological ground. In the situation of *Tegid*'s paternal estate, in the figure presented by that personage, and in the names and characters of his children, we have the history of the deluge presented to our view; and that history is sketched upon British canvas.

The Britons, as we have seen in the preceding section, represented the deluge as having been occasioned by the bursting forth of the waters of a lake. Hence they consecrated certain lakes, as symbols of the deluge; whilst the little islands which rose to the surface, and were fabled to have floated, or else artificial rafts, representing such floating islands, were viewed as emblems of the *ark,* and as mystical sanctuaries. They also regarded certain *rocks,* or mounts, attached to such lakes, as typifying the place of the patriarch's debarkation; and in the midst of these hallowed scenes, they celebrated the memorials of the deluge by some periodical rites. We are therefore told, that the paternal estate of Tegid Voel, the husband of Ceridwen, was in the *centre of Pemble meer,* the largest of the Welsh lakes. This estate must have been limited to the space of a *raft, ship,* or *boat,* which could have floated in such a situation; or else it must be supposed to have suffered that kind of *submersion,* by which our ancestors commemorated the destruction of the ancient world.

But the selection of Pemble meer, in this tale, is not made at random. That lake, and its vicinity, are deeply impressed with mythological memorials of the deluge.

Camden favours us with the description of it by an *antiquarian poet,* in which several circumstances exactly correspond with the British accounts of *Llyn Llion,* their *Diluvian lake,* and justify the choice of our mythologists, in making the *one* a type of the *other.*

* " Hispida qua tellus Mervinia respicit Eurum,
" Est Lacus, antiquo Penlinum nomine dictus.
" Hic *Lacus* illimis, in valle *Tegëius* altâ,
" *Late expandit aquas, et vastum conficit orbem,*
" Excipiens gremio latices, qui, fonte perenni,
" Vicinis recidunt de montibus, atque sonoris
" Illecebris captas, demulcent suaviter aures.
" Illud habet certè Lacus admirabile dictu,
" *Quantumvis magnâ pluviâ non æstuat;* atqui,

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* " Where Eastern storms disturb the peaceful skies,
" In Merioneth famous *Penlin* lies.
" Here a vast lake, which deepest vales surround,
" His wat'ry globe rolls on the yielding ground,
" Increas'd with constant springs, that gently run
" From the rough hills with pleasing murmurs down;
" This wond'rous property the waters boast,
" The greatest rains are in its channels lost,
" Nor raise the flood; but when the tempests roar,
" The rising waves with sudden rage boil o'er,
" And conqu'ring billows scorn th' unequal shore."

"Aere turbato, si ventus murmura tollat,
"*Excrescit subito, rapidis violentior undis,*
"*Et tumido superat contemptas flumine ripas.*"

It is here that the sacred *Dee* rises, from two fountains, which retain the names of the *god* and *goddess* of the ark—here these fountains *unite* their venerated stream, which they roll, *uncorrupted,* through the midst of the *Diluvian lake,* till they arrive at the sacred *mount of the debarkation.*

And here we find one or two objects, which connect the terms of British mythology with those employed by other heathens.

Mr. Bryant observes from Josephus, that the place of descent from the ark, on Mount Ararat, was called Αποϐατηριον; and from Pausanias, that the place where Danaus made his first descent in Argolis, was called Αποϐαθμος. And that Danaus (whose sole history is referred to the deluge, and to Arkite superstition) is supposed to have brought with him the Amphiprumnon, or sacred model of the ark, which he lodged in the Acropolis of Argos, called Larissa.*

Hence our mythologist infers, that the place where the ark, or its representative, came to land, was distinguished by a name, which implied a *descent,* or *going forth.*

Agreeably to this idea, in the spot where *Dwyvawr* and *Dwyvach,* or the incorruptible *Dee,* emerges safe from the waters of the lake, we find the *Bala,* or *going forth.* The term is applied to the *shooting,* or coming forth of leaves and flowers, from the opening buds of plants; and at this Bala there is a large artificial mount, called *Tomen y Bala;* the tumulus *of the Egress,* which seems to have been dedicated to the honour of this sacred stream.

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* Analysis. V. II, p. 329.

In the neighbourhood of this tumulus, rises the hill of *Aren.* But Mr. Bryant tells us, that *Aren* and *Arene,* are names of the ark, and that the city *Arena* is literally, *the city of the ark.**

Our British *Aren* was sacred to *Tydain Tad Awen, Titan, the father of the inspiring muse,* or *Apollo,*† who, as we have already seen, was the Helio-arkite patriarch.

The bards speak of the sanctuaries of their gods, and canonized personages, by the name of *Beddau, Graves,* or *resting places;* just as the temples of Osiris, in Egypt, were regarded as the *sepulchres* of that god. And it is remarkable, that Taliesin joins the *Bêdd* of *Tidain,* in the same stanza with that of *Dylan,* whom I have already proved to have been no other than the Diluvian patriarch.

Bed Tidain, Tad Awen
Yg godir Bron Aren:
Yn yd wna ton tolo,
Bed Dilan Llan Beuno.‡

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* Analysis, V. II. p. 328. 512.

† Thus we find a temple of Apollo upon Mount Parnassus, where the ark of Dencalion rested.

‡ W. Archaiol. p. 79.

"The resting place of *Tydain,* the father of the *inspiring*
"*muse,* is in the border of the mount of *Aren:* whilst the
"wave makes an overwhelming din, the resting place of
"*Dylan* is in the fane of *Beuno,** the *ox of the ship.*"

Of *Beunaw,* the *ox of the ship,* that is, the arkite patriarch, venerated under the shape of that animal; the Welsh Heralds and Monks have made a celebrated saint a descendant of *Tegid,* and a founder of several churches. If ever there was such a saint, he must have borrowed his name from the mythology of his pagan ancestors.

That the name of *Aren* has an ancient mythological meaning, and probably the same which Mr. Bryant assigns to it, may be inferred from the singular coincidence, that as our Welsh *Aren* had a *Bêdd* of *Tydain* or *Apollo,* so, on the top of the *Arenès,* in the borders of Britany, there are the ruins of an old fabric, which is positively decided to have been a temple of the same *god.*† From its situation, in the skirt of Armorica, and in the neighbourhood of *Baieux,* it may be conjectured that this was that identical temple of *Belen,* or *Apollo,* in which *Attiùs Patera* the friend of Ausonius had presided. For that professor is called *Bagocassis,* and is said to have been *Stirpe satus Druidum—Gentis Aremoricæ.*‡

The *Arenès* of Britany, like that of Wales, may also have furnished their Druids with a local opportunity of commemorating the deluge, as they contain a natural phænomenon, which must just have suited their purpose. We are told, that "a league West from this town, (Falaise) "lies the mountain of Arenees. In the village of *Arnes*, "belonging to this town, there is a *lake, fed by subterrane-* "*ous channels*, which sometimes *dries up*, and is *suddenly* "*filled again*."*

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* *Bû,* an *ox,* and *Naw, a ship.*

† See Voyage dans le Finistere, Tom. I.

‡ Auson. Prof. 4 and 10.

But, to return to the lake of Tegid—we may infer from these coincident circumstances, that this lake and its neighbourhood were deeply impressed with the characters of *arkite* superstition; and that our mythological narrator was fully aware of this fact, when he placed the paternal estate of *Tegid*, the husband of *Ceridwen*, in the *bosom of Pemble Meer*.

Let us, therefore, take a brief view of the proprietor of this estate.

Tegid Vohel, bald serenity, presents himself at once to our fancy. The painter would find no embarrassment in sketching the portrait of this sedate, venerable personage, whose crown is partly stripped of its hoary honours. But of all the gods of antiquity, none could with propriety, sit for this picture, excepting *Saturn*, the acknowledged representative of Noah, and the husband of *Rhea*, which was but another name for Ceres, the genius of the ark.

As consort of the arkite goddess, Tegid was evidently the deified patriarch: it has, however, been observed, that this deity was a *Pantheos*, comprehending in his own person,

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* Atlas Geograph. Ed. 1711. p. 1062.

most of the superior gods of the heathens; here then, we contemplate him in the character of *Saturn*. The particulars of Tegid's appropriate history have disappeared; but by a little mythological deduction, we shall discover him under another name.

Tegid, as we have already seen, was the father of Creirwy, the *token of the egg*, or the British Proserpine; and Creirwy was the same personage as *Llywy*, the putting forth of the egg, mentioned by Aneurin and Taliesin, in conjunction with *Hu* or *Aeddon*.

This identity appears from the poems of Hywel, son of Owen, prince of North Wales, who styles *Llywy* his *sister*, and that, in consequence of his matriculation into the mysteries of Ceridwen.* She could not have become the mystical sister of Hywell by this means, had she not been the daughter of that goddess.

The same princely Bard says, that Llywy had stolen his soul, as she had stolen that of *Garwy*; but the mistress of Garwy was *Creirwy*, the daughter of Ceridwen.

Neud wyv dihunwyv hoen Greirwy—hoyw—deg
    A'm hudoedd val Garwy.†

"Am I not deprived of spirit! I am enchanted like "Garwy, by her who equals Creirwy, sprightly and fair."

Creirwy and Llywy being thus the same personage, it follows, that the father of *Creirwy* was also the father of *Llywy;* but the parent of the latter is mentioned in the Triads, by the name of *Seithwedd Saidi.*[*] And here it must be remarked of the lady, that, notwithstanding her exquisite beauty and delicacy, she is classed with two other mythological personages, under the character of *Gwrvorwyn,* a *man-maid,* which must imply a *virago* at least, if not something still less attractive.

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* See the latter part of the present Section.

† W. Archaiol. p. 512.

From these premises it is clear, that *Seithwedd Saidi* was a name of *Tegid,* the father of this mystical lady; and this name, as well as Tegid, must be referred to the character of Saturn.

We shall now have an opportunity of investigating his mythology. *Seithwedd* is an epithet, implying either *septiform,* or else, *having seven courses.* This may allude to the multitude of his names and functions, or to the annual feasts of Saturn, which were continued for the space of seven days. If *Saidi* be a British term, it must be derived from *Sâd, firm,* or *just.* From this word, and *Wrn,* a *covered vessel,* Mr. Owen deduces the Welsh name of *Saturn;* so that *Sad-wrn* is the *just man of the vessel.* This description is not inapplicable to the patriarch Noah, and to his history, the character of Saturn is referred by mythologists in general, and particularly by Mr. Bryant, who takes notice, that *Dagon,* a representative of the same patriarch, was called *Said-on,*[†] which comes near to our *Saidi.*

Seithwedd, or as he is sometimes called *Seithin Saidi,* is represented as king of *Dyved, Demetia*; but this leads us again into the regions of mythology.

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[*] W. Archaiol. V. II. p. 15. 71.

[†] Analysis, V. II. p. 300.

Dyved was the patrimony of *Pwyll, reason* or *patience*, who embarked in the vale of *Cwch*, the *boat*, for *Annwn*, the *great deep*, which he governed for the space of a complete year, whilst *Arawn*, ארון the *Arkite*, styled also *Pendaran, lord of the thunder*, superintended his paternal dominions. Upon a future occasion I shall produce more of this tale. In the mean time, I may be allowed to suggest, that from the specimen here exhibited, Mr. Bryant would have pronounced it genuine arkite mythology.

The district of Dyved was so entirely devoted to the mysteries of Druidism, that it was said to have been anciently enveloped in *Llengêl*, a *concealing veil*: and it was by way of eminence, denominated *Gwlâd Yr Hûd*, the *land of mystery*.

There is a story recorded in the triads, of *Seithenin*, the son of *Seithwedd Saidi*, which states, that upon a certain time, this prince was *intoxicated*, and that in his liquor, *he let in the sea over the country, so as to overwhelm a large and populace district*. This tale, which I must consider hereafter, is of the same origin with those local relations of the *submersion of cities* in the lakes of Britain, which I have remarked in the preceding section.

But *Seithenin* is nothing more than *Septimianus*, a title which the Romans conferred upon Saturn: so that *Seithenin*, and his mythological father, *Seithwedd*, are in reality, the same character.

I find a son of this Saidi under another name, which, together with his rank and connexions, is very remarkable. He is acknowledged as one of three sovereigns in the court of the mythological Arthur, that is, Noah, by the title of *Cadeiriaith*, the *language of the chair*, the son of Saidi; and *Cadraith*, the *law of the inclosure*, the son of *Porthawr Godo*, the *doorkeeper* of the *partial covering*, that is, the ark, or its representative. *

This *doorkeeper* was therefore, the same person with Saidi, and with Tegid, the husband of Ceridwen; and his *name*, and the *office* implied by that name, must be referred to *Janus*, the *deity of the door* or *gate*, whose character has been identified with that of Saturn.

Cadeiriaith, the son of Saidi, holds his dignity in conjunction with *Gor-on-wy, great lord of the water*, the son of Echel, with the *pierced thigh*; and with a third character, named *Fleidwr Flam*, the *incloser of flame*, son of *Godo*, the *arkite cell*.

As one of three *amiable* knights, in the court of the same Arthur, this personage is recognized under the name of *Cadair*, the *chair* or *presidency*, and as the son of Seithin Saidi; he is here classed with *Gwalchmai*, the *hawk of May*, the son of *Gwyar*, *clotted gore;* and with *Garwy*, *water's edge*, son of *Geraint*, the *vessel*, son of *Erbyn*, the *lofty chiefs*.†

This Cadair, or *presidency* of Saturn, was also named

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* See W. Archaiol. V. II. p. 4 and 26.

† Ibid. p. 19 and 74.

Cibddar, the *Mystic,* and he had a son styled *Elmur,* the *fixed or established spirit,* ranked as one of the sovereign BULLS.* Here we come round to the history of *Hu,* the Tauriform, Helio-arkite god, and his sacred animals. The royal bull before us, as I have already observed, is connected with *Cynhaval prototype,* the son of Argat, the *ark;* and with *Aväon,* the *cardinal point,* in the *Ecliptic,* son of *Taliesin, radiant front,* which is a title of the solar deity, and hence, assumed by his priest and representative in the mysteries.

This little excursion in mythological ground, exhibits the various avenues, as pointing to one prominent object. The scattered notices in the mythological Triads, are so many parts of one connected system, and the mystical pedigrees are only intended to shew the relation of those parts amongst themselves. This is only the same story told in the British language, which Mr. Bryant and Mr. Faber analyzed in the Greek, and resolved entirely into the mythology of the Diluvian age, mixed with Sabian idolatry.

We find then, that *Tegid,* the husband of Ceridwen, *Seithwedd Saidi,* and the *doorkeeper* of *Godo,* were one and the same personage, in whom we may have the features of the *Saturn,* or *Janus,* of classical antiquity.

But what our Druids intended, by their personification of the *language of the chair,* or *law of the inclosure of Saturn;* and by elevating this character to the dignity of a *sovereign,* it is difficult to say, unless by this figure, they meant to enforce the authority of their *Bardd Cadair, presiding Bard*

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* W. Archaiol. V. II. p. 4, 13, and 69.

or Druid, and to intimate that, he taught and governed by the maxims and laws of the Diluvian *patriarch.*

Such may have been their meaning; for to this august personage, the character of Saturn, or Janus, is pointedly referred, by our great mythologist, Mr. Bryant; who observes, that amongst all the various representations of the patriarch, there are none, wherein his history is delineated more plainly, than in those of Saturn and Janus, the latter of whom carried about him many emblems to denote his different departments. There was particularly, a staff in one hand, with which he pointed to a rock, from whence issued a profusion of water; in the other hand, he *held a key*. He had generally near him, some resemblance of a ship, and like our Tegid, he had the title of Θυραιος, or the *deity of the door or passage.**

Mr. Bryant also remarks, that though the Romans made a distinction between Janus and Saturn, they were only two titles of the same person; hence many of their emblems were the same. Saturn, like Janus, had *keys in his hand*, and his coins had the figure of a ship. He had the name of *Septimianus;* and the Saturnalia, which were days set apart for his rites in December, were in number *seven.* These rites are said to have been of great antiquity, far prior to the foundation of Rome.†

As our British Saturn was named Saidi, so his mystical spouse seems to have had a title of nearly the same sound; for her chair or sanctuary was called *Caer Sidi,* the *sanc-*

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* See Analys. V. II. p. 253, &c.

† Ibid. p. 260.

tuary of Sidi; but according to Mr. Bryant, Σιδη, *Sidee,* was a legitimate title of Ceres.*

The consideration of this subject I must defer for the present, and go on to examine, whether the children of Tegid and Ceridwen have any similar relation to the history of the deluge.

Their first born was named *Morvran, raven of the sea.* Of this personage, a few particulars are recorded. He was *dark* and *hideous* in his person; he was *Ysgymmydd Aerau, addicted to contention;* and he escaped from the army of the mythological Arthur, or the deified patriarch.

From these hints I conjecture, that the character of Morvran represents the *raven* which Noah sent forth. This was the first animal that proceeded from the *ark:* hence, mythology might regard him as *her first-born son.* And the short account which we have of him, is perfectly consistent with what Mr. Bryant has collected from the ancient mythology of other nations, upon the subject of *Noah's raven.*

It is remarked, that Noah sent the raven out of the ark, by way of experiment; but that it disappointed him and never returned—hence a tradition is mentioned, that the raven was once sent out upon a message by Apollo, but deserted him, and did not return when he was expected.†

But this faithless messenger was for the most part, esteemed a bird of ill omen. His very croaking would put a stop to the process of matrimony. But like *Morvran,* he was also personified by a human character. The mythologists, observes Mr. Bryant, out of every circumstance and title, formed a personage. Hence Pausanias speaks of the *raven,* as an ancient hero, and mentions his family.*

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* See Analys. V. II. p. 380.

† Ibid. 286.

Morvran may then be regarded as the representative of Noah's raven; but what are we to understand by the forlorn condition of *Avagddu, utter darkness,* or *black accumulation,* whose misfortune was the grief of his mother; and who could not be relieved, as we learn from the sequel of the tale, till the renovating cauldron of the deluge had boiled for a year and a day. And what are we to think of his subsequent illuminated state, when he became the pride of Ceridwen, and if I mistake not, married the rainbow?†

Avagddu is made a *son* of Tegid; but as mythological genealogy is mere allegory, and the father and son are frequently the same person under different points of view; this character, in his abject state, may be referred to the patriarch himself, during his confinement in the internal gloom of the ark, where he was surrounded with *utter darkness,* a circumstance which was commemorated in all the mysteries of the gentile world. If this be granted, then the son of Ceridwen, or the ark in his renovated state, is the same patriarch, born anew to light and life, at the close of the deluge.

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* See Analys. V. II. p. 392.

† For these particulars, see the sequel of *Hanes Taliesin,* and that remarkable poem called the Chair of Ceridwen, which I shall produce in the course of this Section.

And as our complex mythology identified the character of the *patriarch,* with that of the *sun;* so *Avagddu* may also have been viewed as a type of that luminary, in his veil of darkness and gloom, during the melancholy period of the deluge. This gloom was afterwards changed into *light* and *cheerfulness;* and thus the son of Ceridwen may be recognized, in his illuminated state, under the titles of *Elphin* and *Rhuvawn Bevyr,* which implies *bursting forth with radiancy,* and seems to be an epithet of the *Helio-arkite god.*

The *chair of Ceridwen* represents *Gwydion,* or *Hermes,* in the act of forming the *Iris,* as a consort for the renovated *sun;* and the allegory is as just as it is beautiful: for what was the secondary cause of this sacred token, but the rays of the sun just bursting forth from the gloom, and mixing with the humid air?

Avagddu, thus considered as a type of the *Helio-arkite god* in his afflicted and renovated state, has a striking coincidence of character with *Eros,* the blind god of the Greeks, who was a distinguished agent in the Arkite mysteries, whose name, in the course of those mysteries, was changed into Phanes,* a title of the sun, not dissimilar to our *El-phin;* and whose symbol was the *bow,* which, as well as the bow of Apollo, alluded to the *Iris.* †

I am not sure, however, that the character of Avagddu had not a secondary allusion, in his forlorn state, to the *uninitiated,* and in his renovation, to the *adept* in the mysteries of Druidism: as the former was regarded as living in darkness, whereas the latter was illuminated and endowed with all knowledge.

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* Bryant's Analysis, V. II. p. 331.

† Ibid. p. 343.

Creirwy, the *token,* or *sacred symbol of the egg,* otherwise called *Llywy,* the *manifestation, or putting forth of the egg,* is not the least remarkable of Ceridwen's children.

As it will appear presently, that the mother is described as a *hen,* or female bird of some species, there seems to be an analogous propriety in the names of the daughter, who, though a *Gwrvorwyn,* or *virago,* was esteemed a paragon of beauty: and, as such, she is classed with *Arianrod merch Don,* the *lady of the silver wheel,* the *daughter of Jove;* whom Ceridwen represents as conducting the *rainbow,* of which she was, therefore, the *appropriate genius;* and with *Gwen, Venus,* the daughter of *Cy-wryd, Crydon,* the *manhood of Crodon,* or *Saturn.**

Creiwy, as daughter of Ceridwen, or Ceres, was the Proserpine of the British Druids. The attributes of the mother and daughter, in the Bardic mythology, as well as in that of other heathens, are so much confounded together, as not to be easily distinguished. Mr. Bryant pronounces them to have been the same mystical personage.†

All the difference which I can perceive in their character, is this. Ceridwen was the genius of the ark throughout its whole history; hence she was viewed as a severe matron, supposed to preside in those public sanctuaries, where the Arkite rites were celebrated: whilst Creirwy, on the other hand, was regarded as the genius of the same sacred vessel, only during its perilous conflict with the waters of the deluge; and therefore represented as a helpless virgin, exposed to dreadful calamities, from which she was at length delivered. She did not preside in the Arkite temples, though she was occasionally associated with her mother; but the private and portable *tokens* delivered to the initiated, and the *wand* or *branch*, which was a badge of the Bardic office, were regarded as her gift.

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* Bryant's Analysis, V. II. p. 260.

The author observes from *Schedius, de Diis Germ.* that Saturn had the name of *Crodo.* The parentage of the British Venus seems to have corresponded with that of the Greek.

† Ibid. p. 41.

This mystical lady is also called *Creirddylad, the token of the flowing or floating*, and described as the daughter of *Lludd Llaw Eraint*, the *chief who governed the vessel, or of Llyr, the margin of the sea:* and here she is an old acquaintance of the English nation, being no less a personage than *Cordelia*, the daughter of *King Lear*.

In an old poem, in which *Gwyn ab Nudd*, King of Annwn, is introduced as a speaker, this potentate describes himself as—

Gordderch Creirddylad merch Lludd,*

"The paramour of *Creirddylad*, the daughter of *Lludd*."

Here we have a hint of a British tradition upon the subject of the *rape* of Proserpine. *Gwyn ab Nudd* was the *Pluto* of the Britons. Annwn, the kingdom of that god, in its popular acceptation, is *hell*, or the infernal regions; but in the mystical poems and tales, *Annwn* seems to be no other than that *deep* or *abyss*, the waters of which burst forth at the deluge. Gwyn, the King of Annwn, was therefore the *genius of the deluge;* and the fable means nothing more, than that the *ark was forcibly carried away by the flood.*

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* W. Archaiol. p. 166.

But the more general name of the daughter of Ceridwen was *Creirwy,* the *token or symbol of the egg;* and under this symbol, the ark was represented in the general mythology of the heathens.

This assertion it may be necessary to support by the authority of Mr. Bryant, who observes, that in many hieroglyphical descriptions, the dove, *Oinas,* was represented as hovering over the *mundane egg,* which was exposed to the fury of *Typhon,* or the *deluge;* and that this egg was, doubtless, an *emblem of the ark,* whence proceeded that benign person, the preacher of righteousness, who brought mankind to a more mild kind of life. Having quoted, from Lucius Ampelius, a passage to this effect—Dicitur et Euphratis fluvio, *Ovum* piscis columbam assedisse dies plurimos, et exclusisse *Deam* benignam, et misericordem hominibus, ad vitam bonam; he thus accounts for the *topography* of the fable. *The ark rested upon mount Baris, in Armenia, the Ararat of Moses; and in this country are the fountains of the Euphrates.*

An egg, adds our author, as it contained the elements of life, was thought no improper emblem of the ark, in which were preserved the rudiments of the future world. Hence in the Dionusiaca, and in other mysteries, one part of the nocturnal ceremony consisted in the consecration of an *egg.* By this, we are informed by Porphyry, was signified the *world.* This *world,* says Mr. Bryant, was *Noah and his* *family;* even all mankind, inclosed and preserved in the ark. This seems to have been a favourite symbol, very ancient, and adopted among many nations. The Persians said of Oromasdes, that he formed mankind, and inclosed them in an *egg*. The Syrians used to speak of their ancestors, the gods, as the progeny of eggs.*

The same learned writer remarks, that in the the temple of the Dioscouri, in Laconia, there was suspended a large hieroglyphical egg, which was sometimes attributed to Leda, and sometimes to Nemesis, the deity of justice. It was sometimes described as surrounded by a serpent, either as an emblem of that providence, by which mankind was preserved, or else to signify a renewal of life, from a state of death; as the serpent, by casting his skin, seems to renew his life. By the bursting of the egg, was denoted the opening of the ark, and the disclosing to light whatever was within contained.†

From the contemplation of this symbol of foreign superstition, we naturally turn to the celebrated *Ovum Anguinum,* or *serpent's egg,* of the Celtic priesthood, as described by Pliny.

This was, by way of eminence, regarded as *Insigne Druidis,* the *Insigne,* or *distinguishing mark* of a Druid. Having already seen so much of the Arkite superstition amongst this order of men, we may easily conceive, that this sacred egg had a reference to the same subject, and that, like the *mundane egg* of other pagans, it was, in some sense, an emblem of the ark. We are told by Pliny, Experimentum ejus esse, si *contra aquas fluitet, vel auro vinctum*—That the test of its genuineness, was its floating against the water, even with its setting of gold. I suppose the author means, that it would keep upon the surface, when drawn *against the stream;* and that, in this passage, he gives us a hint of its mystical import and character, as an emblem of a *floating vessel.*

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* Bryant's Analysis, V. II. p. 319, &c.

† Ibid. p. 360.

It must also be procured, we are told, *Certâ Lunâ,* at a certain time of the moon. This information exhibits the connexion of mythological ideas; for the moon was a *symbol* of *Ceridwen,* and of the *ark.*

The efficacy of the Anguinum, *ad victorias litium, et Regum aditus,* may easily be conceived. The Druids, who were the supreme judges in all litigated causes, may be supposed to have lent a favourable ear to those who produced this credential of their order; and even kings, who stood in awe of their tribunal, would seldom close their gates against them.

The natural historian recites at large the fabulous story of the production of this trinket—*Angues innumeri, æstate, convoluti,* &c.

The same mummery is repeated by the ancient Bards.—
" Lively was the aspect of him who, in his prowess, had
" snatched over the ford that *involved ball,* which casts its
" rays to a distance, the splendid product of the *adder, shot*
" *forth by serpents.*" *

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* Appendix, No. 14.

But this was merely so much *dust* thrown into the eyes of the *profane* multitude.

The Druids themselves are called *Nadredd, adders,* by the Welsh Bards. This title they owed, I suppose, to their *regenerative* system of transmigration. The serpent, which annually casts his skin, and seems to return to a second youth, may have been regarded by them, as well as by other heathens, as a symbol of renovation: and the renovation of mankind was the great doctrine set forth by the *Arkite mysteries*, and by the symbolical *egg*.

The Druids, therefore, were the serpents which assembled, at a stated time in the summer, to prepare these emblems of *Creirwy*, and to conceal within them certain discriminative tokens, which probably were kept as a profound secret from the persons who received them.

Pliny saw one of these *eggs*, but he had not the curiosity to examine it any farther than its cartilaginous integument; otherwise he would probably have discovered, that it contained either a *lunette of glass*, or small ring of the same material; such as those which the Welsh call *Gleiniau Nadredd*. These were certainly *insignia* of a very sacred character amongst our ancestors; and they seem to have been intimately connected with the *Anguinum:* for the annotator upon Camden remarks, that in most parts of Wales, all over Scotland, and in Cornwall, the vulgar still retain the same superstitious notions respecting the origin and virtues of the former, which Pliny records of the latter.* And the *Glain* was viewed as an emblem of renovation: hence

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* Gibson's Camden Col. 815.—See also Owen's Dict. V. *Glain*.

Meilyr calls Bardsey—"The holy island of the *Glain*, in "which there is a fair representation of a resurrection."*

That these Glains were artificial, can hardly admit of a doubt; though some have hastily confounded them with certain productions of nature. We find some of them *blue*, some *white*, a third sort *green*, and a fourth regularly variegated with all these sorts of colours; but still preserving the appearance of glass: whilst others again were composed of earth, and only glazed over.†

It seems most likely, that the secret of manufacturing these Glains was totally unknown in Britain, excepting to the Druids:‡ and it may be collected from some passages, that these priests carried about them certain trinkets of vitrified matter, and that this custom had a view to their Arkite mysteries.

Thus, in the poem called the *chair of Taliesin*, we find the stranger admitted to the ceremonies of lunar worship, upon his exhibiting the *Cwrwg Gwydryn*, or *boat of glass*, a symbol which certainly commemorated the sacred vessel, and probably displayed the figure of a small lunette; as the ark was sometimes described under that figure, and called *Selene*, the *moon*.§

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* W. Archaiol. p. 193.

† See Camden, as cited before.

‡ "With similar reverence the Samothracians, whose devotion to the Cabiric "rites is well known, regarded their magical rings. These were of the nature "of amulets, and were believed to have a power of averting danger."
Faber's Myst. of the Cabiri, V. I. p. 213.

§ Bryant's Analysis, V. II. p. 553.

I suppose that it was from the material, of which this symbol was composed, that even the vessel, in which the patriarch and his family were preserved, was denominated *Caer Wydyr*, the *inclosure*, or *circle of glass*.* And Merddin Emrys, and his nine Bards, are represented as having put to sea in the *Ty Gwydrin*,† or *house of glass;* which could have been no other than a ship or vessel consecrated to Bardic mysteries.

The portable trinket which I have mentioned, whatever its form may have been, was the *Crair*, or *Insignè* of the Druids; and when made or dressed up in the figure of an egg, it became *Creir-wy*, the Insignè or token of the egg, the sacred emblem of the British Proserpine. From the pre-eminent estimation in which this emblem was held, both in Gaul and in our own island, we may draw a reasonable inference, that the Arkite mysteries were the most sacred arcana of the Celtic priesthood.

In the short chapter which gave rise to these remarks, our mythological narrator appears, with a master's hand, to have directed our attention to the history of the deluge, and to the local notions of the Britons relative to that event. We shall now observe his dexterity in delineating the character and operations of Ceridwen herself.

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* Appendix, No. 3.

† W. Archaiol. V. II. p. 59.

HANES TALIESIN.—Chap. II.

“ Then she (Ceridwen) determined, agreeably to the mystery of the books of *Pheryllt*, to prepare for her son a cauldron of *Awen a Gwybodeu, water of inspiration and sciences*, that he might be more readily admitted into honourable society, upon account of his knowledge, and his skill in regard to futurity.

“ The cauldron began to boil, and it was requisite that the boiling should be continued, without interruption, for the period of a year and a day; and till three blessed drops of the endowment of the spirit could be obtained.

“ She had stationed *Gwion* the *Little*, the son of *Gwreang* the *Herald*, of *Llanvair*, the *fane of the lady*, in *Caer Einiawn*, the *city of the just*, in *Powys*, the *land of rest*, to superintend the preparation of the cauldron: and she had appointed a blind man, μυϛης, named *Morda, ruler of the sea*, to kindle the fire under the cauldron, with a strict injunction that he should not suffer the boiling to be interrupted, before the completion of the year and the day.

“ In the mean time Ceridwen, with due attention to the books of astronomy, and to the hours of the planets, employed herself daily in botanizing, and in collecting plants of every species, which possessed any rare virtues.

“ On a certain day, about the completion of the year, whilst she was thus botanizing and muttering to herself, "three drops of the efficacious water happened to fly out of "the cauldron, and alight upon the finger of *Gwion the "Little.* The heat of the water occasioned his putting his "finger into his mouth.

"As soon as these precious drops had touched his lips, "every event of futurity was opened to his view: and he "clearly perceived, that his greatest concern was to beware "of the stratagems of Ceridwen, whose knowledge was "very great. With extreme terror he fled towards his native country.

"As for the cauldron, it divided into two halves; for the "whole of the water which it contained, excepting the "three efficacious drops, was poisonous; so that it poisoned "the horses of Gwyddno Garanhir, which drank out of the "channel into which the cauldron had emptied itself. "Hence that channel was afterwards called, *The poison of "Gwyddno's horses.*"

The most remarkable subject brought forward in this chapter, is the preparation of the cauldron of inspiration and science; but before I consider the import of this mystical vase, I must make a few short remarks.

Ceridwen employs a minister, who is described as the son of a herald, and it may be implied that he himself held that office. It is observed by antiquaries, that of four priests who officiated in the celebration of the mysteries of Ceres, one was distinguished by the title of *Keryx* the *Herald.* Another was named *Hydranus,* from ὕδωρ, water:

and his title, though perhaps not his function, corresponded with that of *Morda* in the present tale.

The keeping up of a continual fire, for the period of a year and a day, in a ceremony which was repeated annually, amounts to the same thing as maintaining a perpetual fire. And this was a solemn rite in the temples of Ceres.

Ceridwen, like Ceres and Isis, appears to have been a great botanist, and well skilled in the virtues of plants. The *Pheryllt,* according to whose ritual she proceeds in her selection, are often mentioned by the Bards, as well as by the prose writers of Wales. The poet Virgil, whose sixth Æneid treats so largely of the mysteries of heathenism, has been dignified with this title; and an old chronicle, quoted by Dr. Thomas Williams, asserts that the Pheryllt had an establishment at *Oxford,* prior to the founding of the university by Alfred.

These Pheryllt are deemed to have been the first teachers of all curious arts and sciences; and, more particularly, are thought to have been skilled in every thing that required the operation of fire. Hence some have supposed, that the term implies *chymists* or *metallurgists.* But chymistry and metallurgy seem rather to have taken their British name from these ancient priests, being called *Celvyddydau Pheryllt,* the arts of the Pheryllt, or some of those mysteries in which they were *eminently* conversant.

As primary instructors in the rites of Ceridwen, or Ceres, I regard the Pheryllt as priests of the *Pharaon,* or higher powers, who had a city or temple amongst the mountains of Snowdon, called also *Dinas Emrys,* or the *ambrosial* *city*. And, therefore, they were the same, in effect, as the priests of the Cabiri.

Mr. Bryant assures us, that the supposed genius of the ark was worshipped under several titles, and that the principal of her priests were the *Cabiri*, whose office and rites were esteemed particularly sacred, and of great antiquity. They were the same as the *Curetes*, *Corybantes*, *Telchines*, and Idæi Dactyli of Crete. In treating of these, continues my author, much confusion has ensued, from not considering, that both the deity and the priests were comprehended under the same title. The original Cabiritic divinity was no other than the patriarch, who was of so great repute for his piety and justice. Hence, the other Cabiri, his immediate offspring, are said to be the sons of *Sadyc*, by which is signified *the just man*. This is the very title given to Noah. *All science, and every useful art*, was attributed to him, and through his sons transmitted to posterity.*

The *Telchinian* and *Cabiritic* rites, we are told by the same author, *consisted in arkite memorials*. They passed from Egypt and Syria into Phrygia and Pontus, from thence into Thrace, and the cities of Greece. They were carried into Hetruria, and into the regions of the *Celtæ*.†

Whatever route these ancient priests may have pursued; and whether they belonged to the original establishment of the nations here mentioned, or were imported from other people; their rites, as described by the learned author, are clearly to be distinguished amongst the Celtæ of Britain;

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* Analys. V. II. p. 461.

† Ibid. p. 471.

and with those *Pheryllt* or *Druids*, who directed the mysteries of Ceridwen.

The tale before us also mentions, *books of astronomy*. Whether the Druids actually had such books or not, it is certain that Cæsar enumerates astronomy amongst the sciences which they professed; and that they not only remarked the periodical return of their festivals, but also mixed with their arkite superstition, an idolatrous veneration of the heavenly bodies, and paid a religious regard to their influence,

I come now to the *cauldron* of Ceridwen, which makes a very conspicuous figure in the works of the mystical Bards, from the beginning of the sixth, to the close of the twelfth century. In these authors, we find the term *pair*, or *cauldron*, used metaphorically to imply the whole mass of doctrine and discipline, together with the confined circle of arts and sciences, which pertained to the ancient priesthood of Britain. The preparation of this vase being a necessary preliminary, to the celebration of their most sacred mysteries, it stands as a symbol of the mysteries themselves, and of all the benefits supposed to result from them.

Hence it becomes a subject of some importance in British antiquities, to inquire into the meaning of this mystical vessel, and to determine the question, whether the ancient superstition of other heathens present us with any thing analogous to it.

From the best information which I can collect upon the subject, it does not appear that this cauldron implies one identical vessel, or at least, that its contents were designed for *one simple* purpose. In the tale before us it is described, as used in the preparation of a decoction of various select plants, which was to constitute the water of *inspiration* and *science.* A few drops of this water fall upon the finger of the attendant, he puts it into his mouth, and immediately all futurity is open to his view. Such knowledge, however, must not be regarded as the result of merely tasting the water, or of any single ceremony whatever; but of a complete course of initiation, of which the tasting of this water was an essential rite.

The poem called *Taliesin's Chair,* enumerates a multitude of ingredients, which entered into the mystical decoction, and seems to describe it as designed, for purification by sprinkling, then, for the preparation of a bath, and again, as used in the rite of libation, and lastly, as constituting a particular kind of drink for the aspirants. The sacred vessel is there called *Pair Pumwydd,* the *cauldron of the five trees or plants,* alluding, I suppose, to five particular species of plants, which were deemed essentially requisite in the preparation.

Some of the mythological tales represent this *pair,* as constituting a *bath,* which conferred *immortality* or restored dead persons to life, *but deprived them of utterance:*[*] alluding to the oath of *secrecy,* which was administered privious to initiation.

In the poem called *Preiddeu Annwn,*[†] Taliesin styles it the cauldron of *the ruler of the deep,* (the arkite god) *which first began to be warmed,* by *the breath of nine damsels* (the *Gwyllion,* or *Gallicenæ*).* He describes it as having a ridge of pearls round its border, and says, that it will not boil the food of the *coward,* who is *not bound by his oath.*

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[*] See Mr. Turner's Vindication, p. 283.

[†] Appendix, No. 3.

Yet the author of *Hanes Taliesin,* speaks of the residue of the water, after the efficacious drops had been separated, as a deadly poison.

From these various accounts, it may be inferred, that the *pair,* was a vessel employed by the Druids, in preparing a decoction of potent herbs and other ingredients, to which superstition attributed some extraordinary virtues; that this preparation was a preliminary to the mysteries of the arkite goddess; that in those mysteries, part of the decoction was used for the purpose of purification by *sprinkling;* that another part was applied to the consecration of the mystic bath: that a small portion of the same decoction, was infused into the vessels which contained the liquor, exhibited in the great festival, for the purpose of libation, or for the use of the priests and aspirants, which liquor, is described as consisting of *Gwîn a Bragawd,* that is, *wine* with *mead,* and *wort,* fermented together: that all the sacred vessels employed in the mysteries of Ceridwen, being thus *purified* and *consecrated* by the *pair,* passed under its name; and that, in these appropriations, the water of the cauldron was deemed the water of *inspiration, science, and immortality,* as conducing to the due celebration of mysteries, which were supposed to confer these benefits upon the votaries.

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* See the preceding Section.

But it seems that the residue of the water, being now supposed to have washed away the mental impurities of the initiated, with which impurities, of course it became impregnated, was now deemed *deleterious,* and *accursed.* It was therefore emptied into a deep *pit* or *channel* in the earth, which swallowed it up, together with the sins of the regenerate.

If we look for something analogous to this in the ancient mysteries of Ceres, we shall find, that the first ceremony was that of purification by *water,* that this rite was performed, both by *sprinkling* and *immersion;* and that the water used for this purpose, underwent a certain degree of preparation, similar to that of the cauldron of Ceridwen.

In the ceremony of purification, says M. De Gebelin, they used *laurel, salt, barley, sea-water,* and *crowns* of *flowers.* They even passed through the fire, and were at last, plunged into the water, whence the hierophant, who was charged with this office, had the name of *Hydranos,* or the *Baptist.**

The sacred vessel which contained this mixtnre of *salt, barley, sea-water,* and other ingredients not specified, must have corresponded with the mystical cauldron of the Britons, amongst the contents of which I find certain "*berries,* the "*foam of the ocean, cresses* of a *purifying quality, wort,* " and *chearful, placid vervain,* which had been borne aloft, " and kept apart from the Moon."†

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* Monde Primitif. Tom. IV. p. 318.

† Cadair Taliesin, W. Archaiol. p. 37.

Thus far, the analogy between the purifying water of the *Greeks* and *Britons,* may be traced. But the mystical cauldron of Ceridwen was also employed in preparing the liquor of those magnanimous aspirants, who *took* and *kept* the oath. It was one of its functions to boil that beverage, or else a certain portion of its contents was added, by way of consecration to the *Gwîn a Bragawd,* or *composition of wine, honey, water, and the extract of malt, or barley.*

However this consecration may have been effected, the correspondence between the mystical beverage of the Greeks and Britons, will appear still more close.

We are told by Clemens Alexandrinus, that as a prelude to initiation, the aspirant was asked, if he had eaten of the fruits of Ceres, to which he answered—Εκ τυμϖανου εφαγον, εκ κυμβαλου εϖιον, εκενοφορησα, ὑϖο τον ϖαστον ὑϖεδυνον.—"I have eaten "out of the *drum,* I have drunk out of the *cymbal,* I have "carried the *kernos,* I have been covered in the bed."

M. De Gebelin explains the *cymbal,* as signifying a vessel, in the form of a large *goblet,* out of which the aspirants drank a liquor, called *kykeon,* which was a mixture of *wine, honey, water,* and *meal;* precisely the *Gwîn a Bragawd* of the British Bards. *

The ancients and mythologists, as my author observes, tell us, that these symbols were intended as memorials of what had happened to Ceres, who, upon her arrival in Attica, when she was wandering in search of her daughter, received this liquor from a woman named Baubo,* and drank it off at a single draught.†

The vessel used in the preparation of this mixture, which was presented to Ceres, is described by Antoninus Liberalis as Διϐητα ϐαθυν, a *deep kettle or boiler*; this might, with propriety, be denominated the *cauldron* of that goddess.

But we are told, the residue of the water in Ceridwen's vessel, was of a poisonous quality. It now contained the sins and pollutions of the noviciates: the cauldron was therefore *divided* into *two equal parts*, and the water ran out of it into a certain terrestrial channel.

This dividing of the water, and pouring of it into a channel in the earth, was a solemn rite, perfectly analogous to the practice of the ancients in the mysteries of Ceres.

The ninth and last day of the celebration of the greater mysteries, when all the ablutions and purifications had been completed, was called *Plemochoe*, from the name of a large earthen vessel, of considerable depth, and widening from the bottom upwards.

On this day, the last of the feast, as we are informed by Athenæus,‡ they filled *two* of these vessels with water, and having placed one of them towards the East, and the other towards the West, they moved them sideways successively, reciting certain prayers. When these were concluded, they poured the water into a kind of pit, or *channel*, pronouncing this prayer, which is contained in the Pirithous of Euripides—

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* Bobo, in the Hiberno-Celtic, implies a *mystery*.

† Monde Primitif. as cited before.

‡ Lib. XI. chap. 15.

"May we be able, auspiciously, to pour the water of "these vessels into the terrestrial sink."*

Thus it appears that the cauldron of Ceridwen, which was, properly speaking, a vessel used in preparing a kind of purifying and consecrating water, is to be understood, in a figurative sense, as corresponding with the several sacred vessels employed in the mysteries of Ceres: and that *genius, science,* and *immortality,* the benefits supposed to be derived from that cauldron, are to be considered as the imaginary result of initiation into those mysteries.

But it has already been observed, that Taliesin describes this cauldron as having been warmed, for the first time, by the breath of nine damsels. This must imply, that the mysteries connected with the cauldron, were supposed to have been *originally* instituted by certain *female hierophants.* These were undoubtedly the *Gwyllion,* from whose songs the patriarch is fabled to have derived his presage of the deluge, and who continued to be represented by fanatical priestesses, bearing the same title, and styled *Gallicenæ* by *Pomponius Mela.*

Here it will probably occur to the reader, that these *nine* mystical damsels allude to the *nine muses;* or that they were merely their representatives in British mythology.

The muses, indeed, were regarded as promoters of genius, as the patronesses of science, and as conferring a kind of immortality: their sacred fountain was the fountain of inspiration; but what had they to do with the mysteries of *Ceres?*

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* See Monde Prim. Tom. IV. p. 329.

As I wish to point out the general analogy between British fable, and that mass of superstition which pervaded other heathen countries, I must be allowed to suggest, that the muses were originally nothing more than *priestesses of Arkite temples,* or attendants on those deified characters, whose history is decisively referred, both by Mr. Bryant and Mr. Faber, to that of the ark, and the Diluvian age.

The first songs which the muses inspired, were in the form of *sacred hymns,* containing the titles and actions of the gods, and describing the rites with which they were worshipped: if therefore, those *gods,* and those *rites,* were *Arkite,* the songs of the muses must have been *the same.*

Deucalion's vessel, which was evidently the ark of Noah, or its representative in a Thessalian temple, is said to have rested upon Mount Parnassus: and the favourite haunt of the muses was about the Castalian spring, upon that mountain.

Mr. Bryant remarks, that when the Athenians sent their first colony into Ionia, the *muses* led the way in the form of bees—*Melissæ:* and adds, that the *Melissæ* were *certainly* female attendants in the Arkite temples.*

In the next page, the learned author tells us, that as the priestesses of Damater (Ceres), who sung the sacred hymns, were called *Melissæ,* so that goddess and Persephone, had the title of *Melittodes,* from the songs made in their honour.

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* Analysis, V. II. p. 376.

The Melissæ, or muses, were therefore the priestesses of *Ceres.*

Osiris was an avowed representative of the Diluvian patriarch; and his consort, Isis, was the same character as Ceres, the genius of the ark: accordingly, we find the same *nine damsels* amongst their establishment in Egyptian mythology. Diodorus tells us, that Osiris was always attended by a company of musicians, amongst whom were *nine damsels,* accomplished in every art relative to music; that this was the reason why the Greeks called them the *nine muses,* and that their president was Apollo, the king's brother.

Taliesin is not, therefore, unclassical, when he represents the *nine damsels* as having first warmed the mystical cauldron of the *ruler of the deep,* and the *Arkite goddess.* And this circumstance adds another link of connexion between the mythology of Britain, and that of Greece and Egypt.

But whence came the original idea of the purifying water, prepared in this celebrated cauldron?

In the tradition of our ancestors, we find that the mystical vase was peculiarly sacred to the god and goddess of the ark. It must then be referred to something in the history of the deluge; for the discovery of which, it may be proper to take a brief view of the ideas which the Britons entertained respecting that awful event.

The following circumstances may be verified by passages in the Bards and the Triads.

The profligacy of mankind had provoked the *great Supreme* to send a pestilential *wind* upon the earth. A *pure poison descended*—every blast was death. At this time the patriarch, distinguished for his integrity, was shut up together with his select company, in the *inclosure with the strong door.* Here the *just ones* were safe from injury. Presently, a tempest of fire arose. It split the earth asunder, to the great deep. The lake *Llion* burst its bounds; the waves of the sea lift themselves on high, round the borders of Britain; the rain poured down from heaven, and the water covered the earth. But that water was intended as a *lustration,* to purify the polluted globe, to render it meet for the renewal of life, and to wash away the contagion of its *former* inhabitants into the chasms of the abyss. The flood, which swept from the surface of the earth the expiring remains of the patriarch's contemporaries, raised his vessel, or inclosure, on high, from the ground, bore it safe upon the summit of the waves, and proved to him and his associates the water of life and renovation.

Agreeably to these ideas, the cauldron which was kept *boiling* for a *year and a day;* which purified the sacred utensils, and the company assembled at the mystic festival; and with its dregs washed away the sins of the regenerate into the terrestrial channel, may have been regarded as an *emblem of the deluge itself.*

This comes very near to the view which the learned and indefatigable Mr. Maurice has taken of some ancient Hindoo traditions.

But how are we to account for such a coincidence in the mythology of nations, so widely separated? Perhaps it would not be an unreasonable supposition, that the rudiments of those fanciful systems, which prevailed over the Gentile world, whatever changes they may have afterwards undergone from local corruption and mutual intercourse, were laid before the nations separated from the patriarchal stock. How are we otherwise to account for the prevalence of the same fabulous relations, and commemorative symbols, in the East of Asia, and amongst a sequestered people in the West of Europe? I am aware that this difficulty has generally been resolved by the supposition, that certain Eastern sages, in some distant age, found their way into these remote regions. But the experience of our countrymen and neighbours, for the last three hundred years, may serve to convince us, that a new religion, *essentially* different from that of an established society, whether polished or barbarous, is not easily introduced. However this may have been, it is curious to observe, in the old poems and tales of the Britons, and in the ancient books of the Hindoos, the same train of superstitious ideas.

The author of the Indian antiquities having told us, that the *Soors*, being assembled in solemn consultation, were meditating the discovery of the *Amreeta*, or water of immortality; remarks, that under this allegory is shadowed out the *re-animation* of nature, after the general desolation made by the deluge. The sea was to be deeply agitated by the impetuous rotation of the mountain Mandar.

The author then recites the gigantic fable, which concludes thus. "And now, a heterogeneous stream, of the "concocted juice of various trees and plants, ran down into "the briny flood. It was from this milk-like stream of "juices, produced from those streams, trees, and plants, "and a mixture of melted gold, that the *Soors* obtained "their immortality."

"Concerning these extravagant mythological details of "the Hindoos (continues Mr. Maurice), I must remark, "that however mysterious the allegory, and however wild "and romantic the language in which it is clothed, this "fact may be depended upon, that there in general lies "concealed at the bottom some physical meaning, or deep "theological truth.—What can this general and stupendous "convulsion of nature shadow out, except the desolation "of the earth, during the period of the universal deluge! "Who is that physician, so renowned in ancient Sanscrit "histories, the great *Dew* Danwantaree, who at length "rose from the churned ocean, the white foam of which "resembled milk, bearing in his hand a *sacred vase, full of* "*the water of life*—unless it be the venerable sage, who "rose from the ocean, who gave new life to his expiring "species, and in his family upheld the human race?—That "great botanist, who first planted the vine, and returned "to the ground that *infinite variety of medical herbs, and* "*innumerable seeds*, which—*Menu* is represented, as taking "into the ark, for the express purpose of renovating de"cayed vegetation after the deluge.——Such is the true "meaning of this Avatar; and such—is the true *Danwan*"*taree* of India, who sprung from the foam of the churned "ocean, bearing the *Amreeta*, or vital *ambrosia*, to the "renovated world."*

To the reader, who is not furnished with the Indian antiquities, I need not apologize for the length of these extracts; and, I trust, the learned author will excuse my making so free with his labours, in consideration of the light which they reflect upon the *renovating cauldron* of Ceridwen, and the ruler of the deep, and perhaps also upon the Κυκεων, or sacred mixture of the Arkite goddess, and her renovating mysteries. But to return to the British story.

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* Indian Antiq. V. II. p. 270, &c.

HANES TALIESIN.—CHAP. III.

" Ceridwen entering just at this moment, and perceiving
" that her whole year's labour was entirely lost, seized an
" *oar*, and struck the blind Morda upon his head, so that
" one of his eyes dropped upon his cheek.

" *Thou hast disfigured me wrongfully,* exclaimed Morda,
" *seeing I am innocent: thy loss has not been occasioned by*
" *any fault of mine."*

" *True,* replied Ceridwen, *it was Gwion the Little who*
" *robbed me.* Having pronounced these words, she began
" to run in pursuit of him.

" Gwion perceiving her at a distance, transformed him-
" self into a *hare*, and doubled his speed: but Ceridwen
" instantly becoming a *greyhound bitch*, turned him, and
" chased him towards a river.

" Leaping into the stream, he assumed the form of a
" *fish:* but his resentful enemy, who was now become an

" *otter bitch*, traced him through the stream; so that he
" was obliged to take the form of a *bird*, and mount into
" the air.

" That element afforded him no refuge; for the lady, in
" the form of a *sparrow hawk* was gaining upon him—she
" was just in the act of pouncing him.

" Shuddering with the dread of death, he perceived a
" heap of *clean wheat* upon a floor, dropped into the midst
" of it, and assumed the form of a single grain.

" Ceridwen took the form of a *black, high-crested hen*,
" descended into the wheat, scratched him out, distin-
" guished and swallowed him. And, *as the history relates*,
" she was pregnant of him nine months, and when delivered
" of him, she found him so lovely a babe, that she had not
" resolution to put him to death.

" She placed him, however, in a coracle, covered with a
" skin, and, by the instigation of her husband, cast him
" into the sea on the *twenty-ninth* of *April*."

Through the fabulous wildness of this chapter, we may discover constant allusions to the history of Ceres, and her mystical rites. Ceridwen here assumes the character of a *fury*. Under that idea, she is elsewhere represented. Taliesin says of himself, that he had been nine months in the womb of *Ceridwen Wrach*, the *hag*, or *fury*. This fury was the goddess of *death*. The death of *Arthur* is implied, by his *contending with the fury in the hall of Glaston-*

bury.[*] And, as Ceridwen was the genius of a sacred ship, so *death,* of which she was the goddess, is represented under the character of the *ship of the earth.*

Pawb a ddaw i'r Ddaear Long,[†] says the Bard—" *Every one will come into the ship of the earth;*" that is, *all men must die.*

All this is strictly applicable to Ceres, considered as the genius of the ark. *She was sometimes enrolled in the list of the Furies.*[‡] Under this character she seems to have represented the terror and consternation, to which the patriarch and his family were exposed during the deluge.

She was also the goddess of *death.* When the ark was constructed, Noah made a door in its side; a circumstance continually commemorated by the Gentile writers. *The entrance through this door, they esteemed a passage to death and darkness.*[§] Hence the aspirants, in the mysteries of Ceres and Isis, as well as Gwion, in our British tale, were terrified with the *image of death.*

" Nothing can be conceived more solemn, than the rites " of initiation into the greater mysteries, as described by " Apuleius and Dion Chrysostom, who had gone through " the awful ceremony: nothing more tremendous and ap- " palling, than the scenery exhibited before the eyes of the " terrified aspirant. It was a rude and fearful march, through " night and darkness—and now, arrived on the verge of

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[*] W. Archaiol. p. 67

[†] Ibid. p. 322.

[‡] Bryant's Analysis, V. I. p. 483.

[§] Ibid. V, II p. 257.

" *death* and *initiation,* every thing wears a dreadful aspect; " it is all horror, trembling, and astonishment:—[*] Accessi " confinium mortis, says Apuleius, et *calcato proserpinæ* " *limine,* per omnia vectus elementa remeavi."[†]

But let us proceed to consider the incidents of the story—Ceridwen seizes an *oar,* and strikes the *Dæmon of the sea* upon his head.

The instrument was a proper symbol to be employed by the *genius* of a *floating vessel,* and the *action* an emblem of her triumph over the *watery element.*

The goddess then transforms herself into a *bitch.* However degrading the symbol, these animals seem to have had a particular connexion with the mysteries of Ceres and Isis.

Virgil, in the sixth book of his Æneid, describes all that it was lawful to reveal of the Eleusinian mysteries; and we find that the first terrific objects which presented themselves to the senses of his hero, whilst the priestess was conducting him towasds the mystic river, were in the form of *bitches.*—[‡] *Visæque* canes ululare per umbras. [§]

Upon this passage, M. De Gebelin remarks—[¶]Pléthon

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[*] "I approached the confines of death, and having nearly trodden the threshold of Prosperine, I returned, being carried through all the elements."

[†] See Ind. Antiq. V. II. p. 312, &c.

[‡] And *bitches* seem to howl amidst the gloom.

[§] V. 257.

[¶] Pletho, in his notes upon the magical oracles of Zoroaster, also speaks of the dogs mentioned by Virgil. It is the custom, says he, in the celebration of the mysteries, to exhibit to the initiated certain fantoms, in the figure of dogs, and many other monstrous spectres and apparitions.

(Scholies sur les oracles magiques de Zoroastre) parle aussi des chiens, dont Virgile fait mention. Cést la contume, dit il, dans la celebration des mystères, de faire paroître devant les initiés, des fantômes, sous la figure des *chiens*, et plusieurs autres spectres et visions monstreuses."*

yes - see Pwyll, in
journey to Ann
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In the sculpture which, according to this author, represents the Eleusinian cave, Ceres is attended by a dog, and the aspirant in the form of a child, is brought into the cave by another dog.†

Plutarch tells us, that Isis was assisted by certain *dogs*, in the discovery of *Anubis*, the child of Osiris, whom his mother had exposed, because she dreaded the anger of Typhon.

This child, the goddess adopted and educated; he became her companion and faithful guard. He had the name of *Anubis*, because he displayed the same vigilance in the cause of the gods, which *dogs* manifested in behalf of their human masters.

The tale, *as here related*, can only be regarded as the history of an aspirant, who was initiated into the mysteries of Isis, instructed in the rites and discipline of her temple, and afterwards became her priest.

Mr. Bryant quotes the authority of Diodosus, who informs us, that at the grand celebration of Isis, the whole solemnity was preceded by *dogs*. This author indeed, produces many instances of *gods*, and their representatives, the

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* Monde Primitif. Tom. IV. p. 336.

† Ibid. p. 339.

priests being termed Κυνες, *dogs*; but he attributes this title to the ignorance of the Greeks, who, according to him, mistook the Hebrew and Egyptian term, *cohen*, a priest, for Κυων, which in their own language, implies a *dog*.*

But, as the mythology of other nations, not intimately connected with the Greeks, and who did not use their vocabulary, furnishes us with a similar application of equivalent titles; and as *gods* and *priests*, with *dogs'* heads, appear in Egyptian, and other foreign monuments; it may be suspected, that there was something more in these titles, than a mere blunder of the Greeks.

Agreeably to Plutarch's hint, there may have been some allusion to the *fidelity*, *vigilance*, and *sagacity* of the animal. And whatever served to keep aloof profane intrusion, and defend the awful sanctity of the temple, may have been symbolized by the *guardian dog*. Thus the *dog* of Gwyn ab Nudd, the British Pluto, is named *Dor-Marth*,† the *gate of sorrow*: this was no *real dog*, but probably the same as the *Proserpinæ Limen*, which Apuleius approached in the course of initiation.

These particulars may suffice to account for the device of our British mythologist, in transforming Ceridwen, the Ceres or Isis of the Druids, into a bitch; whilst the aspirant was converted into a *hare*. This animal, as we learn from Cæsar, was deemed sacred by the Britons; at the same time it was an emblem of *timidity*, intimating the great terror to which the noviciate was exposed, during the mystical process.

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* See Analysis, V. I. p. 40. 108. 329, &c.

† W. Archaiol. p. 166.

This hare is turned, and driven towards a *river*. But he is still in the road to initiation. After the preparation of the *consecrated* water, and the Κυκεων, the first ceremony in the mysteries of the Greeks, was that of purification, which was celebrated, upon the *banks of rivers.* The Athenians performed this ceremony at Agra, on the Ilissus, a river of Attica. Hence the banks of that river were called the *mystic banks,* and the stream itself had the name of Θεςπεςιος, the *divine.*

Here our noviciate takes the form of a fish, whilst the goddess herself, or rather her priest, assumes the character of an *otter.* If κυνες, *dogs,* represented heathen *priests* in general, and especially those of Ceres and Isis; the *otter,* or *water dog,* may very aptly typify the priest, called *Hydranos,* who always attended those mysteries, and whose office it was to plunge the aspirant into the stream.

The next change of the aspirant was into a *bird.* The species is not named. It was probably the *Dryw,* which implies both a *wren* and a *Druid;* and Taliesin tells us that he had been in that form. His adversary became a *hawk;* but we are told, that the hawk was a known symbol of Isis.*

At last, the novitiate becomes a *grain of pure wheat,* and mixes with an assemblage of the same species and character. He was now cleansed from all his impurities, and he had assumed a form, which was eminently sacred to Ceres. In this form, therefore, the goddess receives him into her bosom. In order to accomplish this design, she transforms herself into a *hen,* which was deemed a sacred animal by the Britons, in the days of Cæsar.*

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* Ind. Antiq. V. II. p. 348.

The singular representation of Ceridwen, as swallowing the aspirant; and of the latter, as continuing for a considerable time imprisoned in her womb, must imply something more than his mere introduction into the sanctuary. This aspirant was intended for the *priesthood:* and we have here the history of his inclosure, in some *ship, cell,* or *cave,* which more immediately symbolized the person of the mystical goddess. In this inclosure, he was subjected to a rigid course of discipline. Here he studied the fanatical rites, and imbibed the sacred doctrines of Ceridwen.

This is consonant with the practice of other heathens. Porphyry, in his treatise, *De Antro Nympharum,* tells us, that Zoroaster consecrated a natural cell, adorned with flowers, and watered with fountains, in honour of Mithra, the father of the universe: and that the Persians, intending mystically, to represent the descent of the soul into an inferior nature, and its subsequent ascent, into the intellectual world, *initiated the priest,*—in caverns, or places so fabricated as to resemble them.†

I shall return to this subject in a future section, when I inquire into the nature of some of the monuments of Druidism. But I must now remark, that as the completion of the initiatory rites was deemed by the Gentiles a regeneration, or *new birth,* and distinguished by that name; so our aspirant is represented as having been born again, of the mystical Ceridwen.

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* Vide De Bello Gallico, L. V. C. 12.

† See Ind. Antiq. V. II. p. 242.

As yet, however, we seem to have been only contemplating the *lesser* mysteries—the *greater* are still to succeed.

After the aspirant had completed his course of discipline in the *cell,* had gone through the ceremonies of the *lesser* mysteries, and had been born again of Ceredwen ; we are told, that this goddess inclosed him in a small boat, covered with skin, and cast him into the sea.

This will be best explained by the Greek solemnities.

The first day of the greater mysteries of Ceres, was called *Agyrme,* the *convocation,* being destined to the reception, ablution, and purification of the candidates.

The second day had the name of Ἁλαδε Μυσται, "*Noviciates to the sea:*" this being the form by which the herald summoned those who had passed through the lesser mysteries, to the sea shore, for the purpose, as some have supposed, of completing their purification; but the ceremony seems to have had a further meaning, and it is probable, that on this day, the noviciates embarked upon the sea in certain vessels, commemorative of the real history of Ceres, as genius of the floating ark: for, in *these* mysteries, the whole truth was to be revealed. Accordingly we are told, that Phocion, the Athenian general, taking advantage of this day's solemnity, put to sea, and engaged the enemy in a naval combat.* But let us observe the progress of the British ceremony.

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* Plut. in Vita Phor.

HANES TALIESIN.—Chap. IV.

weir

" In those times, Gwyddno's wear stood out in the beach, " between Dyvi and Aberystwyth, near his own castle. " And in that wear, it was usual to take fish, to the value " of a hundred pounds, every year, upon the eve of the " first of May.

" Gwyddno had an only son, named Elphin, who had " been a most unfortunate and necessitous young man. " This was a great affliction to his father, who began to " think that he had been born in an evil hour.

" His counsellors, however, persuaded the father to let " this son have the drawing of the wear on that year, by " way of experiment; in order to prove whether any good " fortune would ever attend him, and that he might have " something to begin the world.

" The next day, being *May-eve,* Elphin examined the " wear, and found nothing: but as he was going away, he " perceived the coracle, covered with a skin, resting upon " the *pole* of the dam.

" Then one of the wearmen said to him, Thou hast never " been completely unfortunate before this night; for now " thou hast destroyed the virtue of the wear, in which the " value of a hundred pounds was always taken upon the " eve of May-day.

" How so? replied Elphin—that coracle may possibly " contain the value of a hundred pounds.

"The skin was opened, and the opener perceiving the "forehead of an infant, said to Elphin—Behold *Taliesin*, "*radiant front!*

"*Radiant front* be his name, replied the prince, who "now lifted the infant in his arms, commiserating his own "misfortune, and placed him behind him upon his own "horse, as if it had been in the most easy chair.

"Immediately after this, the babe composed for Elphin "a song of consolation and praise; at the same time, he "prophesied of his future renown. The consolation was "the first hymn which Taliesin sung, in order to comfort "Elphin, who was grieved for his disappointment in the "draught of the wear; and still more so, at the thought "that the world would impute the fault and misfortune "wholly to himself."

Elphin carries the new-born babe to the castle, and presents him to his father, who demands whether he was a human being or a spirit; and is answered in a mystical song, in which he professes himself a *general primary* Bard, who had existed in all ages, and identifies his own character with that of the sun.

Gwyddno, astonished at his proficiency, demands another song, and is answered as follows:

Ar y dwr mae cyflwr, &c.*

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* W. Archaiol. p. 76.

"Water has the property of conferring a blessing. It is "meet to think rightly of God. It is meet to pray earnestly "to God; because the benefits which proceed from him, "cannot be impeded.

"*Thrice have I been born.* I know how to meditate. It "is woeful that men will not come to seek all the sciences "of the world, which are treasured in my bosom; for I "know all that has been, and all that will be hereafter," &c.

Let us now make a few observations upon our mythologist's account of those mystic rites, to their final completion.

I have already taken notice that Taliesin, *radiant front,* was properly a title of the sun, and thence transferred to his priest. This priest had now, for a complete year, attended the preparation of the mystical cauldron: he had received the water of inspiration, and with it the sacred lessons of Ceridwen: he had been received and swallowed up by that goddess, and had remained for some time in her womb, or had been subjected to a course of discipline in the mystical cell, and at length he had been born again.

But after this, we find him inclosed in a coracle, or small boat, cast into the sea, and consigned into the hands of Gwyddno Garanhir, and his son Elphin.

The very process here described, evidently relates to a connected series of mystical rites, allusive to one history: and the character and connexions of Ceridwen, the great agent, compared with the import of the mysteries of Ceres, as elucidated by Mr. Bryant and Mr. Faber, abundantly prove, that the reference must be made to the history of the deluge.

According to this tale, therefore, the Britons celebrated the commemoration of the deliverance out of the ark upon the eve of May-day. And if they supposed the deluge to have continued for a year and a day, the period which was employed in preparing the mystical cauldron, the anniversary of its *commencement* would fall, of course, upon the *twenty-ninth of April*.

As Ceridwen threw the coracle into the sea upon that day, so opportune for the drawing of Gwddno's wear on the morrow, it may be inferred, that Gwyddno and his son were intimately connected with the family of Ceridwen. Taking all circumstances into account, we may even presume, that they were the same as her husband *Tegid*, and her unfortunate son *Avagddu*.

Tegid, indeed, is said to have had two sons, whereas Gwyddno is described as having but one at this time: but it may be replied, that *Morvran*, the *raven of the sea*, had deserted his family, previous to the debarkation from the ark.

The idea here suggested respecting Gwyddno, differs from the received opinion of the Welsh, which Mr. Owen thus details in his Cambrian Biography.

"Gwyddno Garanhir, or Dewrarth Wledig, was a Prince "of Cantrev y Gwaelod, and also a poet, some of whose "composition is in the Welsh Archaiology. He flourished "from about A. D. 460, to 520. The whole of his territory was inundated by the sea in his life-time, and it "forms the present Cardigan Bay."

The whole of this account, though *literally* understood in the country, appears to me nothing more than a piece of local mythology, of the same kind as those tales, which assert the submersion of cities in the lakes of Wales. But let us hear the record of the catastrophe, as preserved in the Triads.

"Seithinin the *Drunkard*, the son of Seithin Saidi, King "of Dyved, in his liquor let in the sea, over Cantre'r "Gwaelod, so as to destroy all the houses and lands of the "place, where, prior to that event, there had been *sixteen* "*cities*, the best of all the towns and cities of Wales, excepting Caerleon upon Usk. This district was the dominion of Gwyddnaw Garanhir, King of Caredigiawn. "The event happened in the time of *Emrys*, the sovereign. "The men who escaped the inundation, *came to land* in "Ardudwy, in the regions of Arvon, and in the mountains "of Snowdon, and other places which had hitherto been "uninhabited."*

This is, undoubtedly, the substance of an old *Mabinogi*, or *mythological tale*, and ought not to be received as authentic history. For, in the first place, Cardigan Bay did exist in the time of Ptolemy, who marks the promontories by which it is circumscribed, and the mouths of the rivers which it receives, in nearly the same *relative* situations which they retain at present. But neither Ptolemy, nor any other ancient geographer, takes notice of one of those sixteen cities, which are said to have been lost there in the sixth century.

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* W. Archaiol. V. II. p. 64.

In the next place, we know enough of the geography of Wales, both ancient and modern, to form a decisive conclusion, that a single Cantrev, or *hundred*, never did contain sixteen towns, which would bear the slightest comparison with Caerleon, such as it was in the supposed age of Gwyddno.

Again: the incident is generally represented as having happened, in consequence of having neglected to close a sluice; a cause inadequate, surely, to the alleged effect. And the omission is imputed to a son of *Seithin Saidi,* King of *Dyved,* a character whom we have already traced into the regions of mythology. We have marked his intimate connexion with the history of the deluge, and the mystic rites by which it was commemorated, and have ascertained his *identity* with *Tegid,* the husband of Ceridwen.

The *landing* of those who escaped from this drowned country, upon the mountains of *Snowdon,* is like the landing of Deucalion upon Mount Parnassus. It is not history, but mythology. The district of Snowdon, from the remotest period of British mythology, was famous for its Arkite memorials. Here was the city of *Emrys,* or the *ambrosial* city—this was also called the city of *Pharäon,* or *the higher powers;* that is, the *Baalim,* or Arkite patriarchs. Here the *dragons* were concealed in the time of *Beli** (the solar deity), and in the time of *Prydain,* the son of *Aedd*

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* W. Archaiol. V. II. p. 59.

the Great,* a mystical personage of the same family. As dragons were harnessed in the car of the British *Ked*, as well as in that of Ceres, the concealing of these animals, in a city of the *higher powers*, must imply an establishment of her mysteries.

The land of Gwyddno is said to have been inundated in the time of *Emrys*, the sovereign. This is the personage from whom the temple of *Stonehenge*, as well as the *sacred city* in Snowden, derived its name. If the Britons of the fifth century had a monarch who bore this title, we can only say, that like his successors *Uthyr* and *Arthur*, he was complimented with a name out of the vocabulary of the Druids; and that the age of *Emrys* was *any age*, which acknowledged the *Helio-arkite* superstition.

Let us then return to the dominions of Gwyddnaw. We are told that his castle stood near the shore, between *Dyvi* and *Aberystwyth*: and that his wear, in which a valuable capture was annually made, upon the eve of May-day, was near that castle, in the opposite beach. This gives the same topography of the coast which we find at present; and the stated period of the capture points to some mystical meaning. It connects the tale of Gwyddnaw with that of Ceridwen, who chose the time and place, in the exposure of the coracle, so conveniently for its recovery in the mystical wear, upon the sacred eve. Hence we may expect to find, that Gwyddnaw was the same character as *Seithinin*, or *Serthin*, who introduced the sea over the land, and consequently the same as *Tegid;* or a representative of the great patriarch.

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* W. Archaiol. V. II. p. 55.

His name seems to imply *priest of the ship,* from *Gwydd, presence, attendance,* and *Naw,* an old term for a *ship,* which is retained by Taliesin and Meugant.*

This prince had the surname or title of *Garanhir,* which literally means, the *long* or *high crane.* As to the propriety of this title, it has been already seen, that the *tauriform god,* of the continental Celtæ, was styled *Tri-garanos,* from the circumstance of his carrying *three cranes;* and I may add, that Mr. Bryant has remarked the same symbolical bird, in the Helio-arkite superstition of other nations. The Egyptian *crane,* Abis or Ibis, he tells us, for its great services to mankind, was held in high honour, being sacred to the god of light. He adds that *Geranos,* the Greek name of this bird, was a title of the *sun* himself, and that the priest of Cybele, the same character as our Ceridwen, was styled *Carnas,* which was a title of the deity whom he served, and of the same purport as the former.†

The names *Gwyddnaw* and *Garanhir* appear, therefore, to have had a marked reference to Arkite superstition, and to the character of Ceres, or Cybele.

But, as the mythological personages of the Britons, though few in reality, are honoured with a multiplicity of titles, importing the various functions which they filled, or alluding to the several circumstances of their history; so the same Gwyddnaw is distinguished by the name of *Dewrarth Wledig.* The first of these terms implies the *mighty bear,* and is nearly synonymous with Arthur, the mythological representative of the patriarch: whilst *Wledig* is a title of such eminent dignity, that it is only applied to sovereigns of the highest order.

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* Mal ymsawdd yn llyn heb *Naw*
W. Archaiol. p. 27.
Myned e Fenai cyn ni'm bu *Naw*
Ibid. p. 159.

† See Analysis, V. I. p. 47.

If we advert to the natural history of the crane, he is an aquatic bird, and a great fisher; so Gwyddnaw was a *Diluvian* priest, and a *fisher of men.*

Elphin, the son of this personage, is represented as having been a *most forlorn and unfortunate character,* previous to the opening of the coracle, or mystical *ark;* but afterwards he became illustrious. As the *preparation* of *the cauldron* was designed for the benefit of *Avagddu,* and the *drawing of the wear,* for that of *Elphin,* and as these mystical rites had a mutual connexion and dependence, I think it highly probable, that under these two names, we have a description of the same personage.

The mystical poems represent Maelgwn, as having confined Elphin in a strong stone tower. This may be mere mythology, or it may imply, that the Venedotian king of that name, prohibited some of the heathenish rites of the Britons.

Be this as it may, we find that Taliesin, the great president of the Bards, devotes himself intirely to the interest of Elphin, styles him his *sovereign,* and drops many hints, which evidently place him in the connexion of the British Ceres. Thus—" I came to Teganwy, to maintain the con-" test with Maelgwn, the greatest of delinquents: in the

" presence of the *Distributor,* I liberated my *lord,* even
" *Elphin,* the *sovereign of those who carry ears of corn.*"*

The chief of the Bards seldom assumes the character of a prophet, without adverting to this great atchievement of liberating Elphin; it was his most brilliant enterprize, in which he was assisted, even by a train of *radiant Seraphim.* In short, he always speaks of this act, with as much self-importance, as if he were delivering an oracle, or interpreting the will of a present god.

Taliesin himself was honoured with a title of the sun: he presided in *Caer Sidi,* which, as I shall shew hereafter, was a type of the *Zodiac,* and he claimed the *viceroyalty* of the British island, by the investiture of the *Helio-arkite* god, the acknowledged *emperor of the earth and seas.* We may therefore be sure, that when he speaks of Elphin, not only as his *lord,* but as the *sovereign of all the disciples of Druidism,* he regarded him, as in some sense, identified with that splendid divinity. The same thing may be inferred from another title of Elphin, namely, *Rhuvawn Bevyr, he who radiantly shines forth.*

The son of Gwyddnaw, distinguished by this appellation, is styled *Gwyndeyrn, the blessed* or illustrious *sovereign.*† He is also called *Eurgelain, the golden body,* and ranked with *Madawc mab Brwyn, the benificent son of Sprigs,* and *Ceugant Beilliawg, searcher of certain truth;* two ideal personages who seem to have presided over the art of divination, or oracular mystery. And we are told, that Elphin had

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[*] Appendix, No. 1.

[†] W. Archiol, V. II. p. 3 and 62.

this name, because he was redeemed, at his weight in gold, when he had fallen into the hand of the enemy.*

Hywel, the son of *Owen*, prince of North Wales, says of this personage—

Ton wen orewyn orwlych bedd,
Gwyddfa Ruvawn Bevyr, Ben Teyrnedd.†

"The white wave, with its foamy edge, sprinkles the
" grave; even the mount of the presence of Rhuvawn
" Bevyr, the chief of sovereigns."

These and similar titles, which the Triads and mystical Bards confer upon Gwyddnaw and his son, are surely inapplicable to the lords of a single Cantred, which was now lying in the bottom of Cardigan bay. Their story has been misunderstood; and the titles which primarily belonged to the Helio-arkite patriarch, were transferred to those *priests* who supplied his place, in certain departments of the mystic rites; and particularly, in the finishing scene, where the truth was to be revealed.

Here the noviciate was committed to the *sea*, which represented the *deluge*, in a *close coracle*, the symbol of the *ark*; and after the example of the *just patriarch*, was to be saved from this image of the flood, at Gwyddnaw's *wear*, the type of the *mount* of debarkation.

This wear, I conjecture, from its marked topography, was no other than the natural causeway, or reef of rocks, in Cardigan bay, which the Welsh call *Sarn Badrig.*

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* W. Archaiol. V. II. p. 15 and 69.

† Ibid. p. 277.

With these ideas, the poems ascribed to Gwyddnaw, exactly correspond. They seem to be nothing more than old songs, designed to be chaunted at these mystical representations; but their style and orthography are so very uncouth, that it is difficult to ascertain the meaning of some passages.

One of them is said to have been sung at the time, when the sea covered the land of Gwyddnaw. It contains an imprecation upon some *damsel* who *poured the sea over the land.*

This Nereid or Fury, is described as—

Fynnawn wenestyr mor terwyn—

" The attendant on the fountain of the raging sea." The calamity, as usual, is ascribed to the prevalence of *pride* and *excess*. The water covers the plains. They call, in their extreme distress, upon God, who had provided the chair of *Kedawl,* the *Beneficent,* which is a title of the Arkite goddess, as a place of refuge. Here Gwyddnaw, the *priest of the ship,* confines himself in his chamber, and is preserved from the calamity.

The subject of another of these poems is a contention, between Gwyddnaw and Gwyn ab Nudd, the *Demon* who presided over Annwn, the *deep,* or *abyss.*

I shall attempt the translation of another little poem, ascribed to Gwyddnaw, as it throws considerable light upon his character and office. It is evidently a formula in the celebration of the mystical rites. It pertains to the ceremony of *inclosing the aspirant* in the *coracle,* and launching him into the water, as described in *Hanes Taliesin,* and the reputed author supports the dignity of *Hierophant.*

The Probationer, seeing the wear, or *Sarn Badrig,* at a prodigious distance, and trembling at the thought of the perilous adventure, exclaims,

" Though I love the sea beach, I dread the open sea: a " billow may come, undulating over the stone."

To this, the solemn Hierophant replies—

" To the brave, to the magnanimous, to the amiable, to " the generous, who boldly embarks, the *ascending stone of* " *the Bards will prove the harbour of life! It has asserted the* " *praise* of HEILYN, the *mysterious impeller of the sky;* " and, *till the doom shall its symbol be continued.*"

PROBATIONER.

" Though I love the strand, I dread the wave: great has " been its violence—dismal the overwhelming stroke. Even " to him who survives, it will be the subject of lamen" tation."

GWYDDNAW.

" It is a pleasant act, to wash on the bosom of the " fair water. Though it fill the receptacle, it will not " disturb the heart. My associated train regard not its " overwhelming.

" As for him who repented of his enterprize, the lofty

" (wave) has hurried the babler far away to his death;
" but the brave, the magnanimous will find his compensa-
" tion, in arriving safe at the stones. *The conduct of the*
" *water will declare thy merit.*"

(The Hierophant then addresses the timid, or rejected candidate.)

" Thy coming without external purity, is a pledge that
" I will not receive thee.—Take out the gloomy one!—
" From my territory have I alienated the *rueful steed*—my
" revenge, upon the shoal of earth-worms, is their hopeless
" longing, for the pleasant allotment. Out of the recep-
" tacle which is thy aversion, did I obtain the RAIN-
" BOW."*

This little piece throws more light upon the character and office of Gwyddnaw, than half a volume of hypothetical reasoning could have done.

He performs that very ceremony, which *Hanes Taliesin* ascribes to Ceridwen, the Arkite goddess, *upon the instigation of her husband.* He was then, that husband; or he was a priest, who *personally* represented the deified patriarch: and upon certain stated days, exhibited an emblem of the deluge, by turning his noviciates a drift in Cardigan bay, at the mouth of the *Ystwyth, Styctuis,* or *Styx,* of the Druids, and in covered coracles, which were manifest symbols of the ark. The *worthy* candidate was encouraged to adventure in this hardy probation, with the prospect of being fished up again at the *landing place* of the Bards, when the tide, or pretended deluge had subsided.

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* W. Archaiol. p. 165.

Gwyddnaw and his assistants, ought to have been well acquainted with the setting of the currents, though it be fairly admitted, that occasionally, they made a sacrifice to the *deep*.

The doctrine inculcated by this perilous ceremony, is sufficiently obvious. The same superintending providence, which had protected the *magnanimous* and *amiable* patriarch, from the waters of the deluge, would likewise distinguish his worthy descendants; and by conducting them in safety to the sacred landing place, ascertain their due admission to the privileges of the Bardic religion. At the same time, the very form and condition of this ceremony must have deterred the pusilanimous candidate, as well as *him* that was conscious of secret crimes.

Fortunately, this was the last hazardous scene in the initiatory rites of the Druids. For we find, that as soon as Elphin had extricated the aspirant from his coracle, he received him in his arms, gently lifted him upon his steed, or into his *ship*, for such were the mythological steeds of the Britons, conducted him to his father, and acknowledged him a complete Bard of the highest order.

The old Bards speak in magnificent terms, of the benefits which were derived from these mysterious rites. They were viewed as most important, to the happiness of human life. They imparted sacred science in its greatest purity and perfection; and he who had completed his probation, was called *Dedwydd, one who has recovered intelligence,* or rather, *has been brought back into the presence.* It is nearly equivalent to the Greek term, Εποπτης, which describes a person who had been initiated into the greater mysteries.

Upon this subject, the little poem said to have been recited by Taliesin, immediately after he had gone through the concluding ceremony, is worthy of remark. He describes himself as *thrice born*, that is, *once* of his natural parent, *once* of Ceridwen, and *lastly* of the mystical coracle. As a consequence of this regeneration, he knew how to *think rightly of God;* he perceived that the benefits derived from him could not be impeded. All the sacred science of the world was treasured in his bosom; he knew all that had been, and all that would be hereafter.

This epilogue to the mysteries in its present form, has two stanzas more than what I have translated: in one of these, the Bard acknowledges a Divine Providence; but he introduces a christian idea, representing the *son of Mary* as the pledge of his happiness.

He then tells us, that God, the true Creator of heaven, with whom he had a sure refuge, had been his instructor, and his guardian, and that he would finally take him to himself.

Thus the author, whoever he was, mixes his Bardism with some reference to the christian system. But, as his reflections result from the celebration of rites, which were certainly heathenish, we cannot doubt, but that they were of the same kind with the formula which had been used by his heathen predecessors, upon the same occasion. And how exactly his sentiments, making allowance for his christian allusions, corresponded with those which resulted from the mysteries of Ceres, may be learned from the great Bishop Warburton.

His lordship, having remarked the division of the Eleusinian mysteries, into the *less* and the *greater;* and having stated, that in the former, was inculcated the general belief of a Providence, and a future state, and that they were only preparatory to the *greater*—thus proceeds—

“ But there was one insuperable obstacle in paganism, to a life of purity and holiness, which was the vicious examples of their gods.”——“ There was a necessity therefore of remedying this evil, which could only be done by striking at the root of it; so that such of the initiated, as were judged capable, were made acquainted with the whole delusion. The mystagogue taught them, that *Jupiter, Mercury, Venus, Mars,* and the whole *rabble* of licentious deities, were indeed, only *dead mortals,* subject in life, to the same passions and vices with themselves; but having been, in several instances benefactors to mankind, grateful posterity had deified them; and with their virtues, had indiscreetly canonized their vices. The fabulous gods being thus routed, the *supreme cause of all things* of course, took their place: HIM they were taught to consider, as the Creator of the universe, who pervaded all things by his virtue, and governed all things by his providence. From this time, the initiated had the title of Εποπτης, or, *one that sees things as they are, without disguise;* whereas, before he was called Μυστης, which has a contrary signification.”*

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* Divine Legation, V. I. p. 148.

I have now considered the whole of that singular story, called *Hanes Taliesin:* I have shewn, that it relates to a succession of ceremonies, by which the ancient Britons commemorated the history of the deluge; and that these ceremonies had a constant analogy with the mystical rites of Ceres and Isis, which our best mythologists regard as memorials of the same event.

The narrator seems to have abridged his tale from a *larger history*, or tradition, to which he refers; and, perhaps, he has added a few touches of his own. But the main incidents are derived from the genuine superstition of the Britons, as appears by several passages of the mystical poems.

Thus, in the piece which immediately follows the tale in the Welsh Archaiology, Taliesin gives this account of himself.

Kyntaf i'm lluniwyd, ar lun dyn glwys,
Yn llys Ceridwen a'm penydiwys.
Cyd bum bach o'm gwled, gwyl fy nghynnwys;
Oeddwn fawr, uwch llawr, llan a'm tywys.
Pryd fum parwyden, per Awen parwys;
Ag ynghyfraith, heb iaith, a'm ryddryllwys
Hen Widdon ddulon, pan lidiwys:
Anghuriawl ei hawl, pan hwyliwys.

" I was first modelled into the form of a *pure man, in* " *the hall of Ceridwen, who subjected me to penance.* " Though small within my *chest*, and modest in my de- " portment, I *was great. A sanctuary carried me above the* " *surface of the earth.*

"Whilst I was inclosed within its ribs, the sweet AWEN "rendered me complete: and my law, without audible language, was imparted to me by the old *giantess*, darkly "smiling in her wrath; *but her claim was not regretted when* "*she set sail.*"

The Bard then enumerates the various forms which he had assumed, in order to elude the grasp of Ceridwen. These changes do not seem to relate to the Druidical doctrine of *transmigration;* they rather express the several characters, under which the aspirant was viewed in the successive stages of initiation.

The piece concludes thus.

Fföes yn ronyn gwyn, gwenith lwys,
Ar ael llen carthen i'm carfaglwys.
Cymmaint oedd ei gweled, a chyfeb Rewys,
A fai yn llenwi, fal llong ar ddyfrwys:
Mewn boly tywyll i'm tywalltwys:
Mewn mor *Dylan,* i'm dychwelwys:
Bu goelfain i'm, pan i'm cain fygwys;
Duw Arglwydd, yn rhydd, a'm rhyddhawys.

"I fled in the form of a fair grain of pure wheat: upon "the edge of a covering cloth, she caught me in her "fangs. In appearance, she was as large as a *proud mare,* "which *she also resembled*—then was she swelling out, *like* "*a ship upon the waters. Into a dark receptacle she cast* "*me. She carried me back into the sea of* DYLAN. It "was an auspicious omen to me, when she happily suffocated me. God the Lord freely set me at large."

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In these remarkable lines, the Bard treats of a *course of* *penance, discipline,* and *mystical instruction,* which had contributed to *purify, complete,* and *exalt his character,* and to liberate him from the ills of mortality. Blake ?

These mystical lessons must have consisted in *scenical* or *symbolical* representation; for his law was imparted to him, *without the intervention of language.*

And they commenced in the hall of Ceridwen, who is represented as an *old giantess,* as a *hen,* as a *mare,* and as a *ship,* which set sail, lifted the Bard from the earth, and swelled out like a ship upon the waters. It was also a *sacred* ship, for it is called *Llan,* a *sanctuary,* or *temple;* and it was the *Diluvian ark,* for it inclosed the noviciate, and carried him back into the sea of *Dylan,* or *Noah.* Ceridwen was, therefore, what Mr. Bryant pronounces Ceres to have been, the *genius of the ark;* and her mystic rites represented the memorials of the deluge.

From the language of the Bard, it should seem that this goddess was represented by a series of emblems, each of which was regarded as her image: or else, that she was depicted under one compound symbolical figure, in the same manner as Diana or Hecate, the lunar ark, which is described by the author of the Orphic Argonautics, as having the heads of a *dog,* a *horse,* and a *lion.*[*]

And that the ancient Britons actually did pourtray this character in the grotesque manner suggested by our Bard, appears by several ancient *British* coins, where we find a figure, compounded of a *bird,* a *boat,* and a *mare.*

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[*] Faber's Myst. of the Cabiri, V. I. p. 280.

It may be thought a whimsical conceit in our British Bard, to describe his Arkite goddess under the character of a *mare*. But Taliesin is still classical. Mr. Bryant takes notice, that Ceres was not only styled *Hippa*, the *mare*, but that she was represented as having been changed into the form of that animal.*

The same learned author refers to the patriarch Noah, the character of Dionusus,† who was supposed to have been *twice* born, and thence was styled Διφυης. Sometimes the intermediate state is taken into account, and he is represented as having experienced *three* different lives. Here the authority of the Orphic hymns is quoted, in which this deity has the titles of Τριφυης, *of three natures*, and Τριγονος, *thrice born*. Just so, we have heard Taliesin, in the poem before us, declare—*Teirgwaith a'm ganed—Thrice was I born.* The last birth of Dionusus, adds Mr. Bryant, was from *Hippa*, the *mare, certainly the ark*, at which time nature herself was renewed.§

That the representations which we have in this poem of Taliesin, are authentically derived from the mythology of the heathen Britons, will not admit of a reasonable doubt. What Bard of the sixth century, unless he were conducted by such a *genuine* clue, could have traced the connexion between the character of *Ceres*, under the strange symbol of a *mare*, and the *vessel* of the Diluvian patriarch? What scholar, in modern and enlightened times, could have developed the system which our Bard supports, before the

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* Analysis, V. II. p. 27, &c.

† Ibid. p. 77 and 274.

§ Ibid. p. 410.

genius and *erudition* of *Mr. Bryant* demonstrated, that Ceres or Isis was in reality a female character, supposed to preside over the ark, and that the *mare* was a symbol of this goddess?

The same connexion between the history of the deluge, and the character of Ceridwen, *represented as a hen,* appears in other ancient poems, so as to authenticate the incidents of *Hanes Taliesin.* Thus the president of the Bards, having enumerated several of his mystical transmigrations, proceeds in this strain.—

" I have been a *grain* of the *Arkites,* which vegetated " upon a hill: and then the reaper placed me in a smoky " recess, that I might be compelled freely to yield my corn, " when subjected to tribulation. I was received by the *hen* " *with red fangs, and a divided crest.* I remained nine " nights, an infant in her womb. I have been *Aedd,* re- " turning to my former state—I have died, I have re- " vived—Again was I instructed by the cherisher (hen), " with red fangs. Of what she gave me, scarcely can I " express the great praise that is due. I am now *Taliesin.* " I will compose a just *string,* which shall remain to the end " of time, as a chief model of Elphin."*

The *reaper,* mentioned in this passage, is *Tegid, Gwyddnaw,* or *Seithwedd Saidi,* a character referable to *Noah,* the great husbandman, and the same at *Saturn,* who is furnished with *a sickle,* or scythe.

The period of the aspirant's imprisonment in the womb

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* Appendix, No. 13.

of Ceridwen, is variously represented. *Here*, it is limited to nine *nights;* but elsewhere, we are told, it was nine months.

Mi a fum naw mîs hayach,
Ym mol Geridwen Wrach:
Mi a fum gynt Wion bach;
Taliesin ydwy bellach.*

" I have been, for the space of nine months, in the belly " of *Ceridwen the Fury:* I was formerly Gwion the Little; " henceforth I am Taliesin."

◆

Amongst the ancient poems relative to this mystical personage, I must distinguish one, which is entitled *Cadair Ceridwen;* † in which she is brought forward to speak for herself: or rather, her minister and representative speaks in her name, and touches upon some curious topics of her history. The piece begins thus. ‡

Rhëen rym awyr! tithau
Cereifant o'm correddeu:
Yn newaint, ym mhlygeineu,
Llewychawd yn lleufereu.
Mynawg hoedl, Minawg ap Lleu,
A welais i yma gynneu;

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* W. Archaiol. p. 19.

† The chair of Ceridwen.

‡ W. Archaiol. p. 66.

Diwedd yn llechwedd Lleu:
Bu gwrdd ei hwrdd ynghadeu.

" *Sovereign of the power of the air!* even thou puttest an " end to my wanderings. In the *dead of night,* and *at the* " *dawns,* have our lights been shining Decreed is the con- " tinuance of life to *Minawc,* the son of *Lleu,* whom I saw " here awhile ago, and for the last time, upon the slope of " the hill of *Lleu:* dreadfully has he been assaulted in the " conflicts."

The *sovereign of the power of the air* seems to be the same character as *Heilyn,* the *most mysterious impeller of the sky,* mentioned in the poem of Gwyddnaw. By this title, it might be thought that the Bards meant to describe the *Supreme Being,* who put an end to the calamity of the deluge: but I observe, that in the poem, called the *Chair of Teyrn On,*[*] Apollo, or the solar divinity, is styled, *Heilyn Pasgadwr—Heilyn the Feeder.*

As the ark had wandered upon the surface of the waters, so Ceres, the genius of the ark, is represented as having *lighted torches,* and wandered over the whole earth in search of her daughter, who had been carried away by the king of the *deep.* To *these torches,* or to those which were carried in the celebration of the nocturnal mysteries, and *in commemoration of the state of darkness, in which the patriarch and his family had been involved,*[†] we have a manifest allusion in the verses before us.

Minawc, the son of *Lleu,* to whom a *continuance of life*

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[*] Appendix, No. 4.

[†] Bryant's Analysis, V. II. p. 331.

had been decreed, and *who had taken his departure from the* ARK, upon the *slope of the hill,* was clearly a representative of the patriarch Noah. And his British title seems to have had more than an accidental similarity to one which was conferred upon him by other heathens.

Mr. Bryant tells us, that *Meen, Menes, Menon,* and the like, were titles by which the *Deus Lunus,* that is Noah, was distinguished in different countries:* that the votaries of the patriarch, who was called *Meen* and *Menes,* were styled *Minyæ;* which name was given them, from the object of their worship;† that the *Menæi,* in Sicily, were situated upon the river *Menais;* that they had traditions of a deluge, and a notion that Deucalion was saved upon Mount Ætna, near which was the city *Noa;* that there were of old *Minyæ* in Elis, upon the river *Minyas;* and that the chief title of the Argonauts was that of *Minyæ.*‡

It is a remarkable coincidence, that the same patriarch was worshipped by the name of *Minauc,* in the island *Mona,* and upon the river *Menai.*

It may also deserve notice, that the sentimental picture exhibited in this British passage, has a striking coincidence with the concluding ceremonies in the nocturnal mysteries of the *just person,* and those of the *Arkite Athene,* mentioned in the *Orphic Argonautics,* and thus described by Mr. Bryant.]

" By Αρεινη Αθηνη was meant *Arkite providence;* in other

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* Analys. V. II. p. 309.

† Ibid. p. 242.

‡ Ibid. p. 510.

"words, *divine wisdom,* by which the world was preserved. "In these mysteries, after the people had for a long time "*bewailed the loss of a particular person,* he was at length "supposed to be *restored to life.* Upon this, the priest "used to address the people in these memorable terms. "*Comfort yourselves, all ye who have been partakers of the* "*mysteries of the Deity, thus preserved: for we shall now* "*enjoy some respite from our labours.*" To these were added "the following remarkable words—*I have escaped a great* "*calamity, and my lot is greatly mended*"*

Ceridwen thus proceeds.

Afagddu, fy mab inneu,
Dedwydd Dofydd rhwy goreu:
Ynghyf amryson kerddeu,
Oedd gwell ei synwyr no'r fau:
Celfyddaf gwr a gigleu.
Gwydion ap Don, dygnfertheu,
A hudwys gwraig o flodeu:
A dyddwg moch o ddeheu
(Can ni'bu iddaw disgoreu)
Drud ymyd, a gwryd plethcu:
A rhithwys gorwyddawd, y ar plagawd lys,
Ac enwerys cyfrwyeu.

"As to *Avagddu,* my own son, the correcting god formed "him anew for happiness. In the contention of mysteries, "his wisdom has exceeded mine. The most accomplished "of beings is he.

"*Gwydion,* the son of *Don,* by his exquisite art, charmed

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* Analysis, V. II. p. 332.

‘ forth a woman composed of flowers; and early did he
“ conduct to the right side (as he wanted a protecting
“ rampart) the *bold curves,* and the *virtue of the various*
“ *folds:* and he formed a steed upon the springing plants,
“ with illustrious trappings.”

Ceridwen, having spoken of the conclusion of her *wanderings,* and the continuance of life, which was decreed to *Minauc,* adverts to the history of *Avagddu, utter darkness,* or *black accumulation,* her late unfortunate son. He was now become *Dedwydd,* or Εϖοϖτης, and formed for happiness. This felicity he seems to have attained by means of the *lady,* whom *Gwydion* composed of flowers, adorned with the *bold curves* and *various folds,* and graced with a *stately steed.* This personage could have been no other than the *Genius of the Rainbow,* whom we shall presently find introduced by her *proper name,* and whose province it was to constitute a *protecting fence.*

Gwydion, the son of *Don,* is a great agent in these mystical poems. In another piece of Taliesin's,* we find him counselling *Hu,* or *Aeddon,* the patriarch, to impress the front of his shield with an *irresistible* form, by means of which, both he and his chosen rank, triumphed over the demon of the waters.

This *Gwydion ab Don,* was the same character as *Mercury* the son of *Jove,* or *Hermes,* the counsellor of Cronus or Saturn, mentioned in the fragment of Sanchoniathon.

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* Appendix, No. 10.

Ceridwen, in the next place, touches upon her own endowments and privileges.—

Pan farmer y cadeiriau,
Arbennig uddun y fau :
Fynghadair, a'm pair, a'm deddfon,
A'm araith drwyadl, gadair gysson.
Rym gelwir gyfrwys, yn llys Don—
Mi, ag Euronwy ag Euron.

" When the merit of the presidencies shall be adjudged,
" mine will be found the superior amongst them—my *chair*,
" my *cauldron*, and my *laws*, and my pervading *eloquence*,
" meet for the presidency. I am accounted skilful in
" the court of Don (Jove) and with me, Euronwy and
" Euron."

The *cauldron* of Ceridwen has already engaged our notice. Her *chair* or *presidency*, must imply her *sanctuary*, together with its due establishment, and all the rites and laws pertaining to it. She here speaks of those *laws*, and Taliesin has told us, in a passage which I have produced, that without audible language, she had imparted to him the *laws* by which he was to be governed.

It must be recollected, that Ceres and Isis were esteemed, and styled *lawgivers*.

The poem concludes thus—

Gweleis ymladd taer, yn Nant Ffrancon,
Duw Sul, pryd plygeint,
Rhwng Wythaint a Gwydion.
Dyfieu, yn geugant, ydd aethant Fon,

I geissaw yscut, a hudolion.
Arianrhod, drem clod, a gwawr hinon,
Mwyaf gwarth y marth, o barth Brython,
Dybrys am ei lys, Enfys Avon:
Afon a'i hechrys gurys, gwrth terra.
Gwenwyn ei chynbyd, cylch byd, eda.
Nid wy dywaid geu llyfreu Breda:
Cadair Gedwidedd yssydd yma;
A, hyd frawd, parawd yn Europa.

" I saw a fierce conflict in the vale of Beaver, on the day " of the Sun, at the hour of dawn, between the *birds of* " *Wrath* and *Gwydion*. On the day of Jove, they (the " birds of Wrath) securely went to Mona, to demand a " *sudden shower* of the *sorcerers:* but the *goddess of the sil-* " *ver wheel*, of *auspicious mien*, the *dawn of serenity*, the " *greatest restrainer of sadness, in behalf of the Britons*, " speedily throws round his hall, the *stream of the Rainbow*, " a *stream which scares away violence from the earth*, and " *causes the bane of its former state, round the circle of the* " *world to subside*. The books of the Ruler of the Mount, " record no falshood. The *Chair* of the *Preserver** *remains* " *here;* and till the doom, shall it continue in Europe."

I would recommend the whole of this passage to the attention of the learned, as a subject of importance in British antiquities. It furnishes a proof, beyond doubt or contradiction, of the establishment of Arkite memorials in this island, and sets forth to view some singular traits of British tradition, upon the subject of the deluge.

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* The original word may be a compound of *Kéd*, the Arkite goddess, and *Gwid*, a *whirl*, or *revolution*. Thus Cynddelu says of himself, and his Bardic fraternity——

Gwyr a'n cydberchid uch gwîd gwenen.

" We are men who have been mutually honoured over the *whirl* of the " white stream."—Alluding to their initiation into Arkite mysteries.

See Owen's Dict. V. *Gwid*.

In the first place, Ceridwen, the *Ark,* witnesses a fierce conflict in the vale of the *Beaver.* That animal, under the name of *Avanc,* is constantly introduced into the British account of the deluge; and the drawing of him out of the lake, as we have already seen, is represented as a great act, which was conducive to the removing of that calamity. Our ancestors seem to have regarded the *Beaver* as an emblem of the patriarch himself. To this symbolical honour, this creature may have been promoted, by a peculiarity in his natural history. The patriarch had built himself a vessel or *house,* in which he had lived in the midst of the waters; and which had deposited that venerable personage and his family, safe upon dry ground. So the Beaver is not only an amphibious animal, but also a distinguished architect. He is said to build a house of two stories, one of which is in the water, and the other above the water; and out of the latter, he has an egress to dry ground. The fanciful genius of heathenism could not have demanded or discovered a more happy coincidence, with the history of the Diluvian patriarch.

The conflict here mentioned, was between *Gwydion,* the great agent in the preservation of mankind, and the *Gwythaint,* some feigned, winged creatures, which derive their name from Gwyth, *Wrath,* or *Fury.* These may be considered as the ministers of wrath, or the demons of destruction, let loose at the deluge. When foiled by Gwydion or *Hermes,* they are represented as hastening to Mona, to procure assistance of certain *sorcerers.* These were, undoubtedly the same, which are introduced in Taliesin's elegy, upon the priest of Mona,* by the names of *Math* and *Eunydd,* and described, as introducing the confusion of nature, at the deluge.

Math ag Eunydd, hudwydd gelfydd
Rydd elfinor.

" *Math* and *Eunydd,* masters of the magic wand, let " loose the elements."

From these agents of desolation, the birds of wrath now demand a *sudden shower,* evidently for the purpose of producing a second deluge, that they might triumph over Gwydion.

This new calamity was prevented by *Arianrod,* the *goddess of the silver wheel,* whom Gwydion produced from a combination of flowers. This lady, who was the *dawn of serenity,* poured fourth the stream of the *rainbow;* a stream, which not only *scared away violence from the earth,* but also, removed the *bane,* or *poison* of the deluge, to which the mystical bards have frequent allusions.

This representation is clearly derived from the history of *Noah,* and of the *bow in the cloud,* that sacred token of the covenant which God made with man, and of the promise, that *the waters should no more become a flood to destroy all flesh.* But the incidents which this poem blends with the truth of sacred history, furnish a convincing proof, that the Bardic account was derived through the channel of heathenism.

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* Appendix, No. 10.

In the conclusion, we are told, that the *Chair* or presidency of the *Preserver,* namely, *Ceridwen,* was established here, and so firmly, that it is confidently added, it should continue to the end of time.

This poem was evidently intended to be sung or recited, in the ceremonies of a heathen solemnity, by a priest or priestess, who *personated Ceridwen;* but some paltry and mendicant minstrel, who only chaunted it as an old song, has tacked on three lines, in a style and measure, totally different from the preceding verses.—

An rhothwy y Drindawd
Trugaredd Dyddbrawd—
Cein gardawd gan wyrda!

" May the Trinity grant us mercy in the day of judgment!——*A liberal donation, good gentlemen!*"

The old poem, called the *Chair of Taliesin,* furnishes a long list of the various apparatus, requisite for the due celebration of the feast of Ceridwen: and particularly, enumerates several of the ingredients of the mystical cauldron.

As the curious might wish to compare this British account, with the hints which ancient authors have thrown out, respecting the superstition of the Druids, and with what has been recorded of the mystical rites of other countries; I shall insert the whole of this obscure piece, with the best translation, and explanatory notes which I can supply.

We here find the character of the Arkite goddess identified with that of the *Moon*. Of this circumstance, I have already taken some notice, and have shewn, from Mr. Bryant and Mr. Faber, that such confusion of characters was not peculiar to British mythology.

KADEIR TALIESIN.*

Mydwyf merwerydd
Molawd Duw Dofydd,
Llwrw cyfranc cewydd
Cyfreu dyfnwedydd.
Bardd, bron Sywedydd,
Ban adleferydd
Awen Cudd Echwydd
Ar feinoeth feinydd.

Beirdd llafar lluc de,
Eu gwawd nym gre
Ar ystrawd ar ystre:
Ystryw mawr mire.

Ac mi wyf cerdd fud
Gogyfarch feirdd tud:

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* W. Archaiol. p. 37.

Rydebrwyddaf drud;
Rytalmaf ehud;
Ryddyhunaf dremud—
Teyrn terwyu wolud.

Nid mi wyf cerdd fas
Gogyfarch feirdd tras
Bath fadawl iddas—
Dofn eigiawn addas!

"I am he who annimates the fire, to the honour of the
" god *Dovydd,* in behalf of the assembly of associates, qua-
" lified to treat of mysteries—a Bard, with the knowledge
" of a *Sywedydd,* when he deliberately recites the inspired
" song of the Western *Cudd,* on a serene night amongst
" the stones.

"As to loquacious, glittering bards, their encomium
" attracts me not, when moving in the course: admiration
" is their great object.

"And I am a silent proficient, who address the Bards
" of the land: it is mine to animate the hero; to persuade
" the unadvised; to awaken the silent beholder—the bold
" illuminator of kings!

"I am no shallow artist, greeting the Bards of a house-
" hold, like a subtle parasite——THE OCEAN HAS A DUE
" PROFUNDITY!"

These lines are merely prefatory. As the Bard lived in an age when Druidism was upon the decline, he found it expedient to assert the importance of his own *pontifical* character as distinguished from the mere *poet*, and even from the *Bard of the household*, who was an officer of no mean rank, in the British court, as we learn from the laws of *Howel*. It was his privilege to be entertained at the king's table, to be endowed with free land, to have his wardrobe furnished, and his steed *provided* at the king's expence; yet, he was to give place to the *Cathedral Bard*, or priest, of the ancient national order.

Though I must leave several things in this poem unexplained, it may seem proper to take notice of other particulars, and throw what light I can upon them.

Merwerydd, in the first line, comes from *Marwor*, *embers*, or *hot coals*. It seems to have denoted a person who had the charge of keeping up a fire. The term at present, implies that kind of *madness* or *enthusiasm*, which we suppose to have possessed the heathen prophets. *Dovydd* (line 2) is literally, the *Tamer*, *Domitor*. *Cewydd*, in the next line, an *associate*, from *Caw*, a band or circumscription. Hence *Prydain*, *Dyvnwal*, and *Brân* are styled *Ban-Cewyddion Teyrnedd*, *consolidating sovereigns*.* *Sywedydd* (line 5) a *mystagogue*, or revealer of mysteries. *Ys-yw-wedydd*, a *declarer of what is*. We find *Syw*, pl. *Sywed*, and *Sywion*, in the same sense. *Cûdd*, (line 7) the *dark repository*—the *Ark*.

To proceed with our Bard—

Pwy amlenwis câs
Camp ymhob noethas
Pan yw Dien gwlith
A llad gwenith

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* W. Archaiol. V. II. p. 63.

A gwlid gwenyn
A glud ac ystor
Ac elyw tramor
Ac eurbibeu Lleu
A llon ariant gwiw
A rhudd em a grawn
Ag ewyn eigiawn
Py ddyfrys ffynnawn
Berwr byr yr ddawn
Py gysswllt gwerin
Brecci bonedd llyn
A llwyth Lloer wehyn
Lleddf lloned Verbyn.

"The man of complete discipline has obtained the meed "of honour, in every nightly celebration, when *Dïen* is propitiated with an offering of wheat, and the suavity of bees, "and incense and myrrh, and aloes, *from beyond the seas,* "and the gold pipes of *Lleu,* and cheerful, precious, silver, "and the ruddy gem, and the berries, and the foam of "the ocean, and cresses of a purifying quality, laved in the "fountain, and a joint contribution of wort, the founder of "liquor, supplied by the assembly, and a raised load secluded from the moon, of placid, cheerful Vervain."

This passage, without an atom of poetical merit, and consisting of a mere list of trifles, derives some importance, from the high consideration which those trifles once obtained in our native country. Upon this score, I would ground my apology for lengthening the paragraph, with some attempts at elucidation.

Noethas, (line 24) a *mighty solemnity;* from the old term

Noeth, the *night:* whence we have *He-noeth, this night; Mei-noeth*, a *serene night*, or *May-eve; Peu-noeth*, every night, and *Tra-noeth*, the *morrow*, or *beyond the night: Noethas* also implies an *unveiling*, or *uncovering;* and the priest of Ceridwen, or the *moon*, may have selected this term, either because the night disclosed the object of his veneration, or because her mysteries were *unveiled* only in the night.

In my translation of the 25th line, I have rendered *Gwlith*, as a verb, to *attract*, to *persuade gently*, to *propitiate.* It had such a meaning formerly; hence we read in the Gododin, *Gwlith Eryr*, the *eagle's allurer.*[*] *Gwlith*, in the modern Welsh, only means *dew;* and the line might be rendered *when the Divine dew descends;* but the context seems to require the meaning which I have given to it, and in rendering particular passages in poems, which relate to the Druidical superstition, and which have been obscure for a thousand years, it is necessary to keep in view the general subject, and to compare part with part.

Llad, (line 26) a *benefit, gift* or *offering:* in the printed copy, the orthography is improperly modernized into *Lladd*, to *cut, reap*, or *mow.* The *Briallu*, or *primroses*, mentioned in a subsequent line, were not to be procured at the season of *cutting* wheat.

Gwlid or *Gwlydd*, (line 27) I am not certain whether he means *honey*, or the plant *Samolus*, which was called *Gwlydd;* but I rather think, the latter is here intended. Dr. Borlase remarks, that " the Druids experienced great

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[*] Song 11. See the ensuing Section.

" virtue in, or at least, ascribed it to the Samolus, and " gathered it in a ritual, religious manner. He that was to " perform this office of gathering it, was to do it fasting, " with his left hand," &c.*

Aurbibeu, (line 30) the mineral, *Orpiment*, is so called; but I rather think the *gold pipes* was some plant with a yellow flower, and hollow stem. So *Ariant*, in the next line, may imply the *Fluxwort*, which is called *Ariant Gwion*, *Gwion's silver*, a certain proof that the Druids held it in esteem; for *Gwion* was the *superintendant* of the mystical cauldron.

Em, (line 32) probably the *red gem*, or bud of some tree—*Grawn*, (ib.) the *wild Nep*, or *white vine*, is called *Gravny Pertki*, *hedge berries*, and also *Eirin Gwion*, the *Borues of Gwion*—see the last note.

Berwr, (line 35) *Cresses*. The *Fabaria* is called *Berwr Taliesin*, *Taliesin's cresses*, and is therefore, the plant here intended.

Verbyn, (line 39) *Vervain*. In the British Botanology, this plant has also the following appropriated titles, expressive of its high esteem amongst our ancestors—*Câs gan Gythraul*, the *Fiend's aversion*; *Y Dderwen Vendigaid*, the *blessed oak*; and *Llysiau'r Hudol*, the *Inchanter's plants*.

The Druids, we are told, were excessively fond of the Vervain; they used it in *casting lots* and *foretelling events*.

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* Antq. of Cornwall, B. II. C. 12.—From *Pliny*.

Anointing with this, they thought the readiest way, to obtain all that the heart could desire, to keep off fevers, to procure friendships, and the like. It was to be gathered at the rise of the dog star, without being *looked upon, either by the sun or moon.* In order to which, the earth was to be propitiated by a libation of honey. In digging it up, the left hand was to be used. It was then to be waved aloft, and the leaves, stalk, and roots, were to be dried separately in the shade.

The couches at feasts, were sprinkled with water, in which this plant had been infused.*

Most of the ingredients enumerated in this passage, seem to have been used in the preparation of the mystical cauldron; and they may be regarded as the simples, which Ceridwen was fabled to have selected, with so much care and ceremony.—But let us go on with the catalogue.

A Sywion synhwyr
A sewyd am Loer
A gofrwy gwedd gwyr
Gwrth awel awyr
A mall a merin
A gwadawl tra merin
A chwrwg gwydrin
Ar llaw pererin
A phybyr a phyg
Ag urddawl Segyrffyg
A llyseu meddyg
Lle allwyr Venffyg.

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* Antiq. of Cornwall, B. II, C. 12.—From Pliny, L. XXV. C. 9,

"With priests of intelligence, to officiate in behalf of
"the *moon,* and the concourse of associated men, under
"the open breeze of the sky, with the *maceration* and
"*sprinkling,* and the portion after the sprinkling, and the
"*boat of glass* in the hand of the stranger, and the stout
"youth with pitch, and the honoured Segyrffyg, and medical plants, from an exorcised spot."

The *boat of glass* (line 46) was a token of the same import as the *Anguinum,* or *Glain,* as I have already remarked. In the second volume of Mountfaucon's Antiquities,* there is a sculpture which illustrates this passage. It is a bass-relief, found at Autun, and represents the chief Druid, bearing his sceptre, as head of his order, and crowned with a garland of oak leaves; with another Druid, not thus decorated, approaching him, and displaying in his right hand a crescent, of the size of the moon, when six days old.

The *pitch* (line 48) was, I suppose, for the *faculæ* or *torches,* which were carried during the celebration of the nocturnal mysteries.

Segyrffug means *protecting from illusion.* I imagine it was the name of some plant. The populace of Wales ascribe the virtue implied by this name, to a species of *trefoil.*

The literal translation of the fiftieth line, is *a place cleared from the illusion of the witch.* The practice of ex-

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* Opposite to p. 276.

orcising the ground was common to the Druids, with other ancient priests. The iron instrument used in this rite of exorcising, was to *describe a circle* round the plant, and then dig it up.*

The piece concludes thus—

A Beirdd a blodeu
A guddig berthen
A briallu a briwddail
A blaen gwydd goddeu
A mall ameuedd
A mynych adneuedd
A gwîn tal cibedd
O Ryfain hyd Rossedd
A dwfn ddwfr echwydd
Dawn ei lif Dofydd
Neu pren puraur fydd
Ffrwythlawn ei gynnydd
Rei ias berwidydd
Oedd uch pair pumwydd
A Gwion afon
A gofwy hinon
A mêl a meillion
A meddgyrn meddwon
Addwyn i Ddragon
Ddawn y Derwyddon.

"And Bards with *flowers*, and perfect convolutions, and "primroses, and leaves of the *Briw*, with the points of "the trees of purposes, and solution of doubts, and fre-

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* Antiq. of Cornwall, B. II. C. 12.—From Pliny.

" quent mutual pledges; and with wine which flows to the
" brim, from Rome to Rosedd, and deep standing water,
" a flood which has the *gift of Dovydd,* or the tree of *pure*
" *gold,* which becomes of a fructifying quality, when that
" *Brewer* gives it a boiling, who presided over the cauldron
" of the five plants.

" Hence the stream of *Gwion,* and the *reign of serenity,*
" and *honey and trefoil,* and horns *flowing with mead*——
" *Meet for a sovereign is the lore of the Druids.*"

We have now seen the end of this curious *poem,* if it deserves the name; but a few more remarks may be proper—*Primroses* ranked highly amongst the mystical apparatus, if we may judge from their name, which is a compound of *Bri, dignity,* and *Gallu, power.*

The leaves of the *Briw,* which we find introduced with the *symbolical sprigs,* or *lots,* are probably those of the *Vervain,* which is known by the name of *Briw'r March.* Pliny has told us, that the Druids used this plant in *casting lots,* and *foretelling events.*

The same rite of *libation* is described, as prevailing from Rome to Rosedd. This seems to fix the date of the composition, long before the sixth century—in an age when the Britons were acquainted with the Romans, but whilst Rome itself, as yet was Pagan. It may also be remarked, that here is not a single Christian idea introduced; on the contrary, we find an open profession of *worshipping the moon,* in a *general concourse of men,* and the lore of the Druids is declared to be meet for sovereign princes. Hence I think it probable, that no part of this poem, excepting the introduction, belongs to the *Taliesin* of the sixth century.

The *deep water* seems to imply the *bath,* for immersion; and the *gift of Dovydd,* was the *Selago,* or *hedge hyssop,* which has a synonymous appellative, in modern Welsh, being called *Grâs Duw, Gratia Dei.*

" With great care and superstition did the Druids gather
" the Selago. Nothing of iron was to touch, or cut it,
" nor was the bare hand thought worthy of that honour,
" but a peculiar vesture, or *sagus,* applied by means of the
" right hand; the vesture must have been holy, and taken
" off from some sacred person privately, and with the left
" hand only. The gatherer was to be clothed in white,
" namely, a Druid, whose garment was white, his feet
" naked, and washed in pure water. He was first to offer
" a sacrifice of bread and wine, before he proceeded to
" gather the Selago, which was carried from the place of its
" nativity, in a clean new napkin. This was preserved by
" the Druids, as a charm against all misfortunes."*

Pren Puraur, (line 62) the *tree of pure gold*—the *misseltoe*—Virgil's *Aurum frondens,* and *Ramus aureus,* which the Arch-Druid gathered with a golden hook. Amongst the extraordinary reputed virtues of this plant, was that mentioned by our Bard, of *promoting* the increase of the species, or preventing sterility.† The names of the misseltoe, in the Welsh language, preserve the memorial of its ancient dignity. It is called *Pren Awyr*, the *Æthereal tree*; *Pren Uchelvar*, the *tree of the high summit*; and has four other names, derived from *Uchel*, *lofty*.

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* Antiq. of Cornwall, B. II. C. 12.—From Pliny.

† Ibid.

We find, by the conclusion of the poem, that this, and the other select plants, were amongst the ingredients of the *mystical cauldron*, which had been contrived by Ceridwen, the British Ceres. This produced the *stream of Gwion*, to which were ascribed, not only *genius*, and the power of *inspiration*, but also the *reign of serenity*, which, as we have been told, in the *chair of Ceridwen*, immediately commenced upon the display of the *celestial bow*, at the conclusion of the deluge.

This cauldron, in short, purified the votaries of Druidism, for the celebration of certain mystical rites, which commemorated the preservation of mankind in the ark, and the great renovation of nature.

That a people so strongly attached to their national customs, as the ancient Britons are known to have been, should have pertinaciously adhered to the religion of their ancestors; that the British Ceres should have maintained her honours in the obscure corners of the country, as late as the *sixth* century; and that her votaries should have appeared in public during that age, or in the interval, between the dominion of the Romans and that of the Saxons, is not greatly to be wondered at. There seems to have been several parts of Wales into which Christianity, as yet, had scarcely penetrated; or where, at least, it had not prevailed. Hence Brychan is commended "for bringing up "his children and grand-children in learning, so as to be "able to shew the faith in Christ, to the Cymry, *where* "*they were without the faith.*"*

But that the Welsh princes, to the latest period of their government, should not only tolerate, but patronize the old superstition; and that the mysteries of Ceres should be celebrated in South Britain, as late as the middle of the *twelfth* century, are facts, as *singular* as they are indisputable.

Many of the most offensive ceremonies must, of course, have been either retrenched or concealed; but there is authentic proof, that the honours and the mysteries of Ceridwen did remain. Some of the paragraphs which authenticate this fact, I have produced in the first section of this essay, to which I refer the reader.

Before I look for additional evidence, I shall offer a few hints, with a view of accounting for the fact itself.

The commemorations of the deluge were so pointed and clear, in the mystical rites of the Britons, that when the Bards became acquainted with scripture history, they perceived, and frequently alluded to, the connection between their own national traditions, and the sacred records, respecting *Noah* and his family. Hence they considered their *own* as a genuine descendant of the patriarchal religion, and therefore, as not absolutely irreconcileable with Christianity.

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* Owen's Cam. Biog. V. *Brychan.*—From the Triads.

The Roman laws and edicts, had for some ages, restrained the more cruel customs, and the bloody sacrifices of the Druids: what now remained was their code of mystical doctrines, together with their *symbolical* rites.

The Bards were influenced by their profession, and the princes, who from their infancy, had been accustomed to hear and admire the songs of the Bards, were induced, by national prejudice, to regard these as innocent, at least, if not meritorious: and to fancy, that they might be good Christians enough, without wholly relinquishing their heathenish superstitions.

The ministers of Christianity thought otherwise, and sometimes refused Christian burial to these Gentile priests: and there are many instances of the Bards themselves, promising a kind of recantation, sometime before their death.

Conscience being soothed by these palliatives, gave way to a cogent argument, in favour of the Bardic institution, which was supposed to give a strong support to personal fortitude; and to animate the spirit of national independence, during times, the most difficult and disastrous.

Such appears to have been the feeling of *Hywel,* the son of Owen Gwynedd, who succeeded his father, in the principality of North Wales, and died in the year 1171.

We may infer from the following poem, that this prince had been initiated into the *lesser* mysteries of Ceridwen, and that he eagerly longed for admittance to the *greater*, namely, those of the covered coracle, which were conducted by *Gwyddnaw* and *his son*: for I shall shew hereafter, that, by the *Steed*, in the mystical lore of the Bards, is meant a *boat*, or vessel upon the water; and here we find the meaning ascertained by other circumstances.

SONG BY HYWELL, THE SON OF OWEN.*

" I love in the summer season, the prancing *steed* of the " placid smiling chief, in the presence of the *gallant lord*, " who *rules* the *foam-covered, nimbly-moving wave.* But " another has worn the token of the apple spray:† my " shield remains white upon my shoulder; the wished for " atchievement have I not obtained, though great was my " desire.

" Ceridwen, lofty and fair—slow and delicate in her de-" scending course—her complexion is formed of the mild " light, in the evening hour‡—the splendid, graceful, " bright, and gentle lady of the mystic song—even in " bending a rush would she totter—so small, so delicate, so " feebly descending!

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* W. Archaiol. p. 278.

† That is, " another has been the successful candidate—he carries the em-" blem of victory; whilst my shield retains a blank surface, not blazoned " with the desired atchievement."

Hywel lived in an age of Chivalry; hence the metaphors in this passage.

‡ The new moon, with her *small* and *pallid crescent*, was the symbol of this goddess.

"But though small, she is older than the youth of ten "years. She *is the modeller of our tender age, full of meekness; her juvenile discipline has she freely bestowed.* Yet, as "a heroine, she would rather impede her own prosperity, "than utter one sentence of unseemly import.

. . . .

"*Attend thou my worship in the mystical grove: and "whilst I adore thee, maintain thy own jurisdiction!*"

If we may judge from Hywel's description, Ceridwen had greatly improved in her person and her manners, since the sixth century; but still, she is the same object of idolatrous veneration: she still *communicates her mystical laws* to *the devoted aspirant.*

Upon a subsequent application, our princely Bard seems to have been more successful; for thus he sings of *Llywy,* who, as we have already seen, was the daughter of *Ceridwen,* and was now become the mystical sister of Hywel.

"I love the *Caer* of the illustrious lady, *near* the *pleasant "shore:* and to the place where the modest fair one loves "to behold the *sea mew;* to the place where I am greatly "beloved, I would gladly go.

"I will vow a visit to the serenely fair—that I may behold my *sister* gently smiling—that I may avow the love "which fate has allotted me, in the home of her, who tranquillizes my breast with her mild influence; in the home "of *Llywy, whose hue is like Dylan's wave.*

"*From her dominion, an overflowing deluge has extended* "*to us.* Fair is she, as the snow, which the cold has polished upon the lofty peak.

"*For the severe discipline which I experienced in the hall of the mysterious god, I have obtained her promise—a treasure of high privilege.*

"She has stolen my soul—I am become weak—my spirit is like that of Garwy Hîr—*I am detained for the fair one, in the hall of the mysterious god!*"

And again—

"I shall long for the proud-wrought *Caer* of *the Gyvylchi,* till my exulting person has gained admittance. *Renowned and enterprizing is the man who enters there.*

"*It is the chosen place of Llywy, with her splendid endowments. Bright gleaming, she ascends from the margin of the sea: and the lady shines this present year, in the desart of* ARVON, *in Eryri.*

"A pavilion will not be regarded, nor costly robes admired, by her whose merit I fondly wish to delineate: but if she would bestow the privilege for any strain of Bardism, I would enjoy this night in her society."

If we may judge from these strains of Hywel, and from many similar passages in the works of his contemporaries, the Cambrian Bards were as zealously devoted to the worship of *Ceridwen* and *Llywy,* or *Ceres* and *Proserpine,* in the twelfth century, as they had been in the *sixth,* or in any earlier age of heathen superstition.

We have alredy seen some hints of a *solemn oath,* that was administered to the aspirants, before they were admitted to the mystical rites of these characters: accordingly, the Welsh Archaiology supplies us with an old formulary of introduction in very obscure language, and uncouth orthography, which seems to have been used upon these occasions.

Arthur and *Cai* are represented, as approaching the gate of the sanctuary, which was guarded by the hierophant, and commencing the following dialogue—

ARTHUR.

"What man is he that guards the gate?"

HIEROPHANT.

"The *severe hoary one,* with the *wide dominion*——Who
" is the man that demands it?"

ARTHUR.

"Arthur and the blessed Cai."

HIEROPHANT.

"What good attends thee, thou *blessed* one, thou best
" man in the world!——Into my house thou canst not enter,
" *unless thou wilt preserve.*"

CAI.

"I will *preserve it,* and that thou shalt behold; though
" the *birds of wrath* should go forth, and the *three attendant*
" *ministers* should fall asleep, namely, the son of the *Creator,*
" *Mabon* the son of *Mydron,* attendant upon the *wonder-*

" *ful supreme Ruler*, and *Gwyn*, the *Lord of those who de-*
" *scend from above.*"

HIEROPHANT.

" Severe have my servants been, in *preserving* their in-
" stitutes. *Manawydan*, the son of *Llyr*, was grave in his
" counsel. *Manawyd* truly brought a perforated shield,
" from Trevryd; and Mabon, the son of *Lightning*, stained
" the straw with clotted gore: and *Anwas*, the *winged*, and
" *Llwch Llawinawg, (the ruler of the lake)* were firm guar-
" dians of the incircled mount—Their *Lord preserved* them,
" and I *rendered them complete.*

" Cai! I solemnly announce—though all three should be
" slain; when the privilege of the grove is violated, danger
" shall be found!"

The remainder of this obscure piece, describes the different characters which were supported by Arthur and Cai, after their initiation, and the different fates which attended them. The passage before us may be understood, as involving a *very solemn oath*. The Aspirant engages, in the presence of the Hierophant, who personates his god, to preserve the *laws of the sanctuary*, however he may be assaulted by enemies, or deserted by his friends; whilst the chief priest denounces *in awful obscurity*, the inevitable ruin which will attend the violation of this sacred engagement.

Here we also find, that during the performance of the mystical rites, the Hierophant was attended by *three priests*, each of whom personated a god. This is in perfect conformity with the usage of the Greeks. For, we are told, that in the celebration of the Eleusinian mysteries, four priests officiated. The *Hierophant,* who represented the *Great Creator:* the *torch-bearer,* who personated the *sun;* the *Herald,* who was regarded as a type of *Mercury,* and the *minister* of the *altar,* who was venerated as the symbol of the *moon.*

Having now taken a considerable *range in the grounds of British superstition,* I shall dismiss the present subject, with the persuasion, that the facts which I have brought forward in this, and the preceding section, will furnish a master-key to the stores of British mythology.

It has been proved, that the great secret of the ancient Bards, who professed themselves disciples of the Druids, and consequently of the Druids themselves, resolves itself into the mystical rites of *Hu* and *Ceridwen;* that these characters were no other than the *Bacchus* and *Ceres* of antiquity, whose mysteries are acknowledged to have been *duly celebrated* in *the British islands;* and that the ceremonies and traditions of the Britons, had evident analogy with the superstitions of the Greeks, and of some of the Eastern nations.

It has also been seen, that the British mysteries commemorate the deluge, and those characters which are connected with its history; and thus furnish an undeniable confirmation of Mr. Bryant's opinion, that *Ceres* was an imaginary *genius* of the *Ark,* from whence the post-diluvian world derived their being, their laws, and their sciences;

whilst on the other hand, that opinion supplies a lucid solution of the great Bardic ænigma, *that every thing sacred, pure,* and *primitive,* was *derived from the cauldron of Ceridwen.*

In British antiquities, the subject is new, and upon that account alone, may be deemed curious by many readers; but I regard it in a more important light, as in connexion with the discoveries of Mr. Bryant and Mr. Faber, affording a demonstration to the candid philosopher, that heathenism had no foundation of its own to rest upon, and that its tottering fabric merely leaned against the great historical truths, which are recorded in the sacred volume.

SECTION IV

The Design of the circular Temples and Cromlechs of the Druids.—Original Documents relative to the celebrated Structure of STONEHENGE.

THE superstition of the Britons, as we find it delineated in the ancient Bards, and probably, as it existed for many centuries, before the time of any of those Bards which are now extant, appears to have been a heterogeneous system, in which the memorials of the patriarch, and of the deluge, and some of the true principles of the patriarchal religion, were blended with a mass of absurdity, and an idolatrous worship of the host of heaven.

Thus, whilst *Ceridwen* is the genius of the Ark, we observe, that at the same time, the *moon* is her representative in the heavens. Her husband, *Tegid* or *Saidi*, commemorates *Noah;* but he is also viewed in the planet *Saturn;* and by the name of *Hu,* he even takes possession of the solar orb. *Avagddu,* the *black accumulation,* which appalled the world at the deluge, has brightened into *Rhuvawn Bevyr,* or the *splendor of the regenerated sun.*

Hence we must expect to find, that the temples which were sacred to this motley superstition, had some reference to the *celestial,* as well as to the *terrestrial* objects of adoration.

It has been already remarked, that *Cadeiriath Saidi,* or *the language of the chair of Saidi,* was personified; and that he constituted an important character in British mythology.

But such an ideal personage as this, could have been nothing more than a representative of the sacred *ceremonies, doctrine, laws,* and *institutes* of Druidism: as exhibited and taught, in the temple or sanctuary of Ceridwen, and of the other mythological group.

This temple was named *Caer Sidi,* the *circle, or sanctuary of Sidi;* and Taliesin's presidency, as high priest in that temple, was styled *Cadair Caer Sidi,* the *chair of Caer Sidi.* The doctrine and the law which he pronounced from that *chair,* were therefore, the *Cadeiriaith,* or *language of the chair.* Let us now inquire, why the name of *Caer Sidi* was appropriated to the Druidical temples.

I might cut this matter short, by asserting upon the authority of Mr Bryant, that *Sidi,* or Σιδὴ, was one of the names of Ceres.

" As the Ark, says that great mythologist, was looked
" upon as the mother of mankind, and stiled *Da-Mater,*
" so it was figured under the resemblance of the Ῥοια, *Po-*
" *megranate,* since abounding with seeds, it was thought
" no improper emblem of the Ark, which contained the
" rudiments of the future world. Hence the deity of the
" Ark was named *Rhoia,* and was the *Rhea* of the Greeks."
" —Another name of the pomegranate was *Sidè* (Σιδὴ, *Sidee*)
" of which name there was a city in *Pamphylia,* and
" another in Boeotia, which was said to have been built
" by Side, the daughter of Danaus, which may be in a

"great measure true: for *by a daughter of Danaus*, is meant "a priestess of *Da-Naus*, the *Ark*, the same as Da-Mater."*

According to this deduction, *Sidee* must have been as legitimate a name as *Rhea*, for the genius of the Ark; and it must have represented that sacred vessel, as hitherto *impregnated with its seeds;* or, as containing the patriarch and his family, who became objects of superstitious veneration, to succeeding ages.

But the British Caer *Sidi* was derived through another channel. It appears from the *spoils of the deep*, one of the principal of the mystical poems of Taliesin,† that the original Caer Sidi, and the prototype of that sanctuary, in which our Bard presided, was no other than the *sacred vessel*, in which the mythological *Arthur* and *his seven friends escaped the general deluge.* Thus the Britons regarded *Caer Sidi* as a name of the *Ark.*

But as the Britons, like many other heathens, had blended their commemorations of the patriarch and his family, with the worship of the host of heaven; as the *sun*, *moon*, and *planets*, were now viewed as emblems of their consecrated progenitors, and of their sacred ship, and probably had engrossed the greatest part of popular veneration; so we find that the name of *Caer Sidi*, or *Sidin*, was transferred from the sacred ship, to that *great circle*, in which those luminous emblems of their gods presided and expatiated. In British astronomy, it was become the name of the *Zodiac.*

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* Analys. V. II. p. 380.

† Appendix, No. 3.

Agreeably to the idiom of the Welsh language, the words *Caer Sidi,* or *Sidin,* imply the *circle,* or *inclosed place* of the *revolution.* We may, therefore, admire the dexterity with which the genius of mythology appropriated the title, first, to the *vessel* in which *all the surviving inhabitants of the world performed the greatest revolution* recorded in history; secondly, to *that celestial circle,* in which the luminaries of the world *perpetually revolve;* and lastly, to the *Druidical temples,* which appear from the works of the Bards, to have had a marked reference, both to the *sacred ship,* and to the *Zodiac.*

Their reference to the former may be proved, not only from the *spoils of the deep,* but also from Taliesin's poem upon the sons of *Llŷr,** where he tells us, that his chair, or presidency, was sacred to Ceridwen.

Neud amug ynghadeir o beir Ceridwen!
Handid rydd fy nhafawd,
Yn addawd gwawd Ogyrwen.

" Is not my chair protected by the cauldron of Cerid-" wen? Therefore, let my tongue be free, in the *sanc-" tuary of the praise of the goddess."*

And again, in the same poem, he names and describes this presidency—

Ys cyweir fy nghadeir *ynghaer Sidi*
Nis plawdd haint a henaint a fo yndi
Ys gwyr Manawyd a Phryderi
Tair Orian y am dan a gan rhegddi

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* Appendix, No. 1.

Acam ei bannau ffrydieu gweilgi
A'rffynawn ffrwythlawn yssydd odduchti
Ys whegach nor' gwîn gwyn y llyn yndi.

"Complete is my chair in *Caer Sidi:* neither disorder "nor age will oppress him that is within it. It is known "to *Manawyd* and *Pryderi,* that three loud strains round "the fire, will be sung before it; whilst *the currents of the* "*sea are round its borders,* and *the copious fountain is open* "*from above,* the liquor within it is sweeter than delicious "wine."

It is clear, from these remarkable passages, that the name of *Caer Sidi* was given to the sanctuary, in which the rites of Ceridwen were celebrated: for the presidency which was protected by the *cauldron of Ceridwen,* and the presidency of *Caer Sidi,* imply one and the same thing. And the sanctuary of that presidency is described with circumstances, which can be referred only to the history of a ship, and which evidently allude to the Ark.

The *currents of the deep compass it about,* and the *copious fountain is open from above;* still there is safety, tranquillity, and comfortable subsistence within. All this is the literal history of the Ark, and there can be little doubt, but that it is also the history of some rites, which the Britons observed in commemoration of it.

That the same sanctuary had its allusion to the great circle of the Zodiac, may be inferred from the language of the same Taliesin, who vaunting of the high importance of his pontifical office, assimilates his own character with that of *Apollo,* or the sun.

Having informed us, in the poem which is called *his his-*

tory, that he had received the *Awen,* or *inspiration,* from the cauldron of *Ceridwen,* he concludes in this manner.

Mi a fum ynghadair flin
Uwch Caer Sidin
A honno yn troi fydd
Rhwng tri elfydd
Pand rhyfedd ir byd
Nas argennyd.*

" I have presided in a toilsome *chair,* over the *circle of* " *Sidin,* whilst that is continually revolving between three " elements; is it not a wonder to the world, that men are " not *enlightened?"*

Here the Bard, as usual, blends the description of *celestial* objects with that of their *representatives* on earth. The *Caer Sidin,* which continually revolves in the midst of the universe, is the *circle of the zodiac.* Here the *sun,* the great luminary of the world, is the *visible president.* Our Bard could not pretend to have presided in *this Caer Sidin;* but as his own assumed name, *Taliesin, radiant front,* was a mere title of the sun, so, as chief Druid of his age, he was the priest and *representative* of the *great luminary* upon earth; and his vicegerent in that sanctuary, which typified *the abode of the gods.*

In the subject of British antiquities, it might be deemed of some importance to ascertain the form of those *Caer Sidis,* or sanctuaries, in which our ancestors celebrated the rites of their *Ceridwen* or *Ceres,* and performed other acts of worship—to determine whether those sanctuaries consisted merely of *caves,* *glades* in the sacred *groves,* *islets* in the *lakes* or margin of the sea, and the like; or whether they are to be recognised in those *round trenches* and *circles of stones,* which still remain in various parts of these islands, and have been deemed Druidical temples. I shall therefore offer such hints upon the subject as occur to me, and leave them to the consideration of mythologists and antiquaries.

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* W. Archaiol. p. 20.

As the Britons distinguished the *zodiac* and the *temples,* or sanctuaries of their gods, by the same name of *Caer Sidi,* and as their great Bard, Taliesin, blends the *heavenly* and the *terrestrial Sidi* in one description, we may presume, that they regarded the *latter* as a type or representation of the *former.*

The two great objects of their superstitious regard, as we have already seen, were the *patriarch* and the *ark;* but under the names of *Hu* and *Ceridwen,* these were figured or represented by the two great *luminaries,* which revolve in the celestial zone. And this conceit was analogous to the mythology of other nations. For *Liber Pater* was the same as *Dionusus,* who, according to Mr. Bryant, was the patriarch Noah; and *Ceres* was the genius of the ark: yet we find that Virgil, the most learned of the poets, unites their characters with those of the *sun* and *moon.*

> ——— * Vos, O clarissima mundi
> Lumina, *labantem cœlo qui ducitis annum*
> *Liber,* et *alma Ceres!*

Were a representation of this idea of the poet, to be

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[*] O Liber, and holy Ceres, ye bright luminaries of the world, who lead forth the year, revolving in the heavens!

made in sculpture, we should see the two great mythological characters moving in their proper *orbits,* amongst the *signs* of the *zodiac,* which mark the different seasons of the *revolving year,* and which the Egyptians style *the grand assembly,* or *senate of the twelve gods.**

In Mons. de Gebelin's Monde Primitif,† I observe a curious antique design, taken from the zone of a statue, supposed to be that of Venus, which is highly illustrative of this subject. Here, the story of Ceres and Proserpine is beautifully told. The former goddess is mounted upon a car, formed like a *boat* or *half moon,* and drawn by *dragons;* holding lighted torches in her hands, she flies in search of her daughter, who is violently carried away in Pluto's chariot. Hercules, or the *sun,* leads the procession, and the group is hastening into the presence of Jupiter, who appears enthroned on a cloud. The whole is surrounded with *twelve oblong tablets,* or *short pillars,* upon which are depicted the twelve signs of the zodiac, in an erect posture; intimating evidently, that the mythology of those personages was connected with an exact observation of the stars, and of the return of the seasons. And, agreeably to this hint, we find that the mystical Bards, and tales of the Britons, constantly allude to the completion of the *year,* and the return of a particular *day,* when they treat of the history and the rites of Ceridwen.

Were a *pantheon,* or *temple of the assembled gods,* to be designed *after the model of this sculpture,* we should have the principal figures stationed in the central area, and the *pillars* of the constellations ranged about them in a *circle.*

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* Bryant's Analysis, V. II. p. 483.

† Tom. IV. Pl. 7, Fig. 1.

And were this to be undertaken, by a people who abhorred *covered temples,* and either *disallowed the use of sculpture,* or else *were ignorant of the art;* the central figures would be represented by *rude masses* of wood or stone, and the *rude* pillars of the constellations would occupy the outward circle, as in the *British monuments, delineated by Dr. Borlase and other antiquaries.*

That the Druidical temples were generally of a round form, appears by the appellative terms which the Bards constantly use in describing them, as *Caer Sidi,* the *circle* of *revolution; Côr,* a *round or circle, Cylch,* a *circle;* and *Cylch Byd,* the *circle of the world,* which occurs in *Aneurin* and *Taliesin.**

It is also evident, that they were composed of *stone:* for *Aneurin, Taliesin,* and *Merddin,* speak of the *stones* which composed these circles. But let us endeavour to identify *one* of their circular temples, that we may have some rule to judge of the rest.

In the poems of Hywel, the son of Owen, which I have already quoted, that prince says expressly, that *the proud-wrought inclosure in the Gyvylchi, in the desert of Arvon, in Eryri, or Snowden, and towards the shore,* was the *Caer,* or *sanctuary of the mystical goddess,* and the *chosen place of her daughter Llywy,* or the *British Proserpine.*

The topography of this temple is so minutely pointed out, that the spot cannot be mistaken: and if we find here a monument which has any appearance of representing the Zodiac, or *Celestial Caer Sidi*, it may serve as a guide, in distinguishing other British monuments of the same kind.

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* To this I may add, *Cylch Balch Nevwy, the proud, or magnificent celestial circle,* round which the *majestic oaks,* the symbols of *Taronwy,* the *god of thunder,* spread their arms.

Taliesin, Cerdd Daronwy.

Dwy-*Gyvylchi* is still known, as the name of a parish, in the very spot where the Cambrian prince fixes his *Caer Wen Glaer*, or *sanctuary of the illustrious Lady*, in the *deserts of Arvon*, in *Eryri*, and *towards the sea:* and here the remains of the *Caer* are still to be found.

The annotator upon Camden, having described a strong fortress, " seated on the top of one of the highest moun-" tains, of *that part of Snowden, which lies towards the sea;*" gives the following account of this ancient temple.

" About a mile from this fortification, stands the most " remarkable monument in all Snowden, called *Y Meineu* " *Hirion*, upon the plain mountain, within the parish of " Dwy-*Gyvycheu*, above Gwddw Glâs. It is a *circular* " *entrenchment*, about twenty-six yards diameter; on the " outside whereof, are certain *rude, stone pillars;* of which " about *twelve* are now standing, some two yards, and " others five foot high: and these are again encompassed " with a stone wall. It stands upon the plain mountain, as " soon as we come to the height, having much even ground " about it; and not far from it, there are three other *large* " *stones*, pitched on end, in a *triangular form*."*

We are also told that, at the distance of about three furlongs from this monument, there are several huge heaps, or *Carns*, and also *cells*, constructed of huge stones, fixed in the ground, and each cell covered with one or two stones of a superior size.

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* Gibson's Camden, Col. 805.

Such was the sanctuary which was held sacred to *Ceridwen* and *Llywy*, or *Ceres* and *Proserpine*, in the middle of the *twelfth* century, an age in which the honours of those characters were not forgotten: for we have already seen, that their mysteries, strange as the fact may appear, were still celebrated, not only with toleration, but also under the patronage of the British princes.

Hywel's avowed veneration of those mysteries, into which he himself had been initiated, would not have permitted him to speak lightly, and at random, upon the subject of this hallowed fane. And his own studious disposition, joined with his rank in society, must have procured him access to the best information, respecting the antiquities of his country, had any deep research been requisite. But this case presented no difficulty. There could have been no doubt of the intention of a temple, which was sacred to an *existing superstition*. A regular succession of mystical Bards had hitherto been maintained, from the days of Taliesin, and from the ages of pure Druidism.

Hence, by comparing this structure with the facts previously stated, we may fairly conclude, that in those ages, the temples which were sacred to British mysteries, were regarded as images of *Caer Sidi*, or the Zodiac, as they were dignified with its name, or else were so constructed as to represent some of the *phænomena*, displayed in that celestial zone.

In this monument of the *Gyvylchi*, we find the *circle of twelve stones*, which undoubtedly represented the twelve signs, the same which appeared upon the Antique, published by M. De Gebelin, commemorative of the history of Ceres and Proserpine.

From the description quoted out of Camden, imperfect as it is, we may infer, that the temple of the Gyvylchi is a work of the same kind as those circular monuments of stone, which have attracted the notice of the curious, from the South to the North extremity of this Island, and which our best antiquaries pronounce, not only to have been temples of the heathen Britons, but also to have been constructed upon *astronomical principles:* in short, to have represented, either the Zodiac itself, or certain *cycles* and *computations*, deduced from the study of astronomy. Hence the frequent repetition of *twelve, nineteen, thirty,* or *sixty* stones, which has been remarked in the circles of these monuments.

Our fane of Snowden, it is admitted, could never have vied in magnificence, with a *Stonehenge*, or an *Abury*. In the ages of Druidism, it could have been regarded only as a *provincial* sanctuary, but the number of *twelve* stones which constitutes its circle, is *twice* repeated in the stupendous fabric of *Abury;* it frequently occurs also, in the Cornish monuments, noted by Dr. Borlase; and it is found in the complete temple of *Classerniss*, in the Western Isles of Scotland. Here is also the *cell*, consisting of three huge stones, erected in a *triangular form*, as in the structure of Abury.

From this little Cambrian chapel, then let us endeavour to trace our way to the larger monuments of British superstition.

That *Stonehenge* was a Druidical temple of high eminence, and that its construction evinces considerable proficiency in astronomy, has been the decided opinion of many respectable antiquaries. That I may not multiply proofs of a fact so generally known, I shall only extract part of the learned Mr. Maurice's remarks upon that celebrated monument.

" But of all the circular temples of the Druids, (says the " author of the Indian Antiquities) as Stonehenge is the " most considerable, a description of it from the most ancient and the most modern writer on that subject——is " here presented to the reader. I take it for granted, that " the passage cited by *Diodorus,* from *Hecatæus,* and before alluded to by Mr. Knight, is [to be understood of] " *this identical temple* of *Stonehenge,* or *Choir Gaur,* its " ancient British name, meaning, according to Stukeley, " the *Great Cathedral* or *Grand Choir;* and surely, no *national church* could ever better deserve that distinguished " appellation."*

The author then quotes the passage from Diodorus, respecting the *Hyperborean* temple of *Apollo,* to which he adds the following remark—" Such is the account given " near two thousand years ago, *of this circular temple,* FOR " IT COULD MEAN NO OTHER, by Diodorus the Sicilian, " from a writer still prior in time."†

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* Ind. Antiq. V. VI. p. 123.

† Ibid. p. 125.

Mr. Maurice, in the next place, extracts the description which is given of the same monument, in Mr. Gough's edition of Camden; and these are his remarks upon it.

" There is no occasion for my troubling the reader with " any extended observations, on these accounts of Stone- " henge. Whoever has read, or may be inclined to read " my history of oriental architecture, as connected with " the astronomical, and mythological notions of the anci- " ents, printed in the third volume of this work—may see " most of the assertions realized, in the form and arrange- " ment of *this old Druid temple.* For, in the first place, " it is *circular,* as it is there proved, all ancient temples to " the *Sun* and *Vesta*——were. In the second place, the " *Adytum* or *Sanctum Sanctorum,* is of an *oval* form, re- " presenting the *Mundane egg,* after the manner that all " those adyta, in which *the sacred fire perpetually blazed*—— " were constantly fabricated. In the third place, the situ- " ation is fixed astronomically, as we shall make fully evi- " dent when we come to speak of Abury: the grand en- " trances, both of this temple, and that superb monument " of antiquity, being placed exactly North-east, as all the " *gates* or portals of the ancient caverns, and cavern temples " were; especially those dedicated to *Mithra,* that is, the " *sun.*—

" In the fourth place, the number of stones and uprights " (in the outward circle) making together, exactly *sixty,* " plainly alludes to that peculiar, and prominent feature of " *Asiatic* astronomy, the sexagenary cycle——while the " number of stones, forming the minor circle of the cove, " being exactly *nineteen,* displays to us the famous *Metonic,* " or rather *Indian* cycle; and that of *thirty,* repeatedly

"occurring, the celebrated age, or generation of the
"Druids.

"Fifthly, the temple being *uncovered*, proves it to have "been erected under impressions, similar to those which "animated the ancient Persians, who rejected the im-"pious idea of confining the Deity—within—an inclosed "shrine, however magnificent, and therefore, consequently, "at all events, it must have been erected before the age "of Zoroaster, who flourished more than five hundred "years before Christ, and who first covered in the Persian "temples.

"And finally, the heads and horns of oxen and other "animals, found buried on the spot, prove that the san-"guinary rites, peculiar to the *Solar superstition*—were "actually practised, within the awful bounds of this hallowed "circle."*

I have omitted a few clauses, in which the ingenious author derives the *British*, immediately from the *Indian* superstition; partly because his opinion might appear to disadvantage, unsupported by the arguments which are adduced in various parts of this dissertation; and partly because I have some kind of evidence, that what was exotic in the system of the Britons, came to them by the way of *Cornwall*, and therefore was probably derived to them from the *Phœnicians*.*

Our learned author's opinion of the dignity of this struc-

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* Ind. Antiq. V. VI. p. 128.

† See Sect. 5.

ture, of the knowledge of astronomy displayed in its plan, and of its destination as a heathen temple, I should suppose will hardly be disputed. Yet still, those gentlemen who assert, that *the Druids left no monuments behind them,* but *their venerated oaks,* will pertinaciously contend, that *no evidence has been produced* to connect the design of this stupendous pile, with the national superstition of the Britons.

It appears to me, however, that *considerable evidence of this connection does exist;* and I hope, I shall not perform an unacceptable office to the public in bringing it forward.

A great and notorious event, namely, the massacre of the British nobility in the neighbourhood of Stonehenge, by Hengist, the Saxon king of Kent, furnished the ancient British writers with occasion, for the frequent mention of this venerable pile.

The story of this massacre is familiar to the old writers of England and Wales; but by way of introduction to the documents which I mean to produce, it may be proper to insert a connected account of its circumstances, from a modern author of the former nation.

Mr. Warrington, in his history of Wales, relates the transaction in this manner.

When Hengist and his Saxons approached the British coast, after the death of Vortimer, they found that the inhabitants, under the command of Vortigern, were fully determined to oppose their landing. Upon this occasion, the Saxon chief had recourse to an expedient, suggested by his wily and fertile imagination, as well as from a knowledge of the people, with whom he had to act. In this artifice, the weakness or the treachery of Vortigern was employed. Hengist sent to assure that monarch, that his purpose of coming into Britain was not to offer any violence to the kingdom, but only to make a vigorous opposition against his son Vortimer, whom he artfully pretended, he thought to have been alive.

It was likewise proposed by Hengist, that an interview should take place between them, and that each of the chiefs should meet at the place appointed, attended by the most eminent of his train; and in order to banish every idea of hostile intention, it was artfully suggested by the Saxon, that both parties should appear without their arms. The proposal was agreed to by the king; the time of meeting was fixed for the May following; and the place appointed for the interview was at *Stonehenge*, upon Salisbury plain.

In the meantime, Hengist having assembled his chieftains, laid open to them his design, that under the colour of meeting the Britons, for the purposes of peace, and to establish a lasting alliance, he intended to murder the chiefs who should attend Vortigern to the interview; that by striking so decisive a blow, he might cut the sinews of future resistance. At the same time he gave orders, that his train, who attended the meeting, should carry knives concealed in their sleeves; that when the signal was given, each of them should instantly stab the person who sat next to him; and he closed this infernal order, by requiring them to behave like men, and to shew no mercy to any person, but to the king.

Notwithstanding the many proofs the Saxons had given of their perfidy, the Britons, with a degree of credulity, peculiar to themselves, fell into the snare, and came unarmed to the place appointed for the interview; where, by the contrivance of Hengist, they were placed with his train, alternately at the tables, under the pretence of confidence, and of a friendly intercourse with each other.

When the festivity was at the height, and probably, in the unguarded moments of intoxication, Hengist gave the signal agreed on—*Take your Seaxes.* At that instant, every Saxon drew out his knife, and plunged it into the bosom of the person who sat next to him. Above three hundred of the British nobility, the most eminent for their talents, in the council or in the field, perished in this bloody carousal.—Vortigern was spared in the general carnage, though detained a prisoner by Hengist; probably with no other design, than as a cover to a subsequent act of the British prince, which carries with it a strong appearance of baseness; for in order to obtain his liberty, he made an assignment to the Saxon chief, of the counties of Norfolk and Sussex, and also confirmed him in the possession of his former territories.*

To these incidents of the massacre, many old writers add the exploit of *Eidiol* or *Eidol*, a British prince, who had the good fortune to escape. His character is recognized by English antiquaries, who call him *Eldol* or *Edol*, and say that he was *Earl* of Gloucester, in the year 461.†

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* Warrington's Hist. of Wales, 1st Edit. p. 57.

† See Dugdale's Baronage, p. 1, with his authority: and Gibson's Camden, col. 287. *Earl* must be here regarded as a mere translation of his *British* title.

The Triads speak of this Eidiol's having killed an incredible number of the Saxons, on the day of Hengist's plot, with a quick-beam truncheon.[*] The Welsh chronicles of Tyssilio and Geoffry, which in this æra, may be allowed to blend some true history with their fable, limit the number which he slew, to *seventy* men. But these annalists, finding that *Eidiol* was both a *temporal prince,* and a *bishop,* have thought proper to give us two brothers of *that name,* styling one of them *Earl,* and the other *Bishop* of Gloucester. This must be a mistake. The two characters were united in one person, and I conjecture, that this person was no other than *Emrys,* or *Ambrosius,* who immediately after the massacre, was elevated to the British throne. The very same actions are ascribed to *Eidiol* and to *Emrys,* such as *burying* the British nobles, *erecting* their monument at Ambresbury, taking Hengist prisoner at *Caer Gynan,* or Conisborow, and causing him to be beheaded.[†] If this Eidiol was not Ambrosius, we must consider him as the great *agent* and *counsellor* of that prince, to whom his actions were consequently ascribed.

But to proceed. It were not to be expected, that the circumstances of this massacre, so memorable in the history of our country, should be passed over in silence by the Bards of the *sixth century.* Their lamentations upon the woeful subject, are frequent and pathetic. Of these, I shall produce two instances, which will fully explain the light, in which our remote ancestors contemplated the *celebrated fabric of Stonehenge.* The first of these documents is the

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[*] W. Archaiol. V. II. p. 68.

[†] Compare W. Archaiol. V. II. p. 255, 256—271—273, with Gibson's Camden, Col. 847, and Warrington's Hist. of Wales, p. 64, and his authorities.

See also the songs of the Gododin, in the sequel of this section.

Song of CUHELYN.*

Greid bleid blyghawd
Gretyf detyf durawd
        Gnawd brawdwriaeth

Gwr oet Eiteol
Gorwy rëol
        Gordethol doeth

Gwyth vill Dragon
Gosparth Brython
        Gosgyman weith

Gnawt tryganet
Gnawt kyhidet
        Gorset metveith

Met win kyvran
Marchauc midlan
        Man meidrolaeth.

Medrit mur IOR
Maus pedir pedror
        MAWR COR KYVOETH.

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* W. Archaiol. p. 164. In the table of contents, it is ascribed to a Bard of the eighth century; but in Mr. Owen's *Cam. Biog.* more accurately, to Cuhelyn the son of Caw, about the middle of the *sixth century.*

Moes breisc vrëyr
Moes wirth vehir
Milwr orwyth.

Maer claer kywid
Mad cathyl kyvid
Möidit ieith.

Mas cas nognaw
Maer antedawg
Maredawg doeth.

Medel visci
Mel vartoni
Mynogi gwyth.

Myn vinad vron
Medw *mal* ton
Mor tros draeth.

Mer kerteu kein
Myvir corein
Mirein Anoeth.

Menestir Vytud
Meuet vedud
Molud esmwyth.

Music a gan
Mal eur orian
Man vyhanieth.

Gweith reith rysset

Gwich ruich rywet
Rinwet Rëen.

Rec rysiolav
Rec a archav
Ruymav Virchen.

Rhuthyr uthyr awel
Rynaut uvel
Ryvel febin.

Ruteur dyrlyt
Rychlut clotryt
Rihit adien

Reuvet parawd
Rin vyn wascawd
Tra gwawd wobrin.

Ry hait itawt
Rycheidw y nawt
Rac kawt gelyn.

Rychetwis detyf
Rychwynis gretyf
Rae lletyf Ogyrven.

Rae dac drossot
Reghit brid bod
Rot Cuhelin.

Of this poem, the following is as close a translation, as the concise and obscure language of the Bard will admit.

Darkening was the sullen wrath of the wolf,* naturally addicted to the law of steel, his accustomed rule of decision.

At the time when the brave *Eidiol* was presiding in the circle, a man eminently distinguished for wisdom:

Then the chief, having malice in his designs against the Britons, made with them a pretended compact.

A proclamation was issued, inviting equal numbers to a conference at a banquet of mead.

The mead and wine are distributed by the knight of the inclosure, at the appointed spot:

And the spot appointed, was in the precinct of *Iôr*; in the fair quadrangular area of THE GREAT SANCTUARY OF THE DOMINION.

To indulge the brawny chief—to indulge him whose virtue was the rushing of spears, the warrior, supreme in wrath,

The illustrious chief of song raises the munificent strain in the language of panegyric;

But death was the hateful reward of the *indwelling* chief of song, magnificent and wise.

The reaping blade confounded the honied strain of Bardism with the gratification of fury;

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* *Hengist,* as it is fully evident from the subsequent passages.

The breast, intent upon violence, rages like the drunken wave of the sea, tumbling over the strand:

It overwhelms the pleasing strains, the study of the *circle*, the fair circle of *Anoeth*.

Thus, the minister of *Buddud*, possessing the talent to rehearse the gentle song of praise,

Chaunted his music, like a golden hymn, on the area of *battle:*

But it was the *battle* of sudden assault—of the dreadful, bursting shriek—the mysterious purpose of the chief,

Who exclaimed with a curse—"I will rush forth"—with an execration—"I will command! I will bind the sovereign:

"Like the sudden bursting of a dreadful gale, blow ye
"up the conflagration of war against the youthful heroes.

"The flaming gold will he merit, who overwhelms the
"renowned; and he shall be defended blameless:

"Here is affluence provided for us:—the purpose of my
"mind is a protection from the obloquy of the enterprise!"

Pre-eminent was his merit, who strove to protect the sanctuary from the violence of the foe.

He did preserve the institute, though nature groaned indignant before the gentle goddess.

Instead of a tear shed over him, may his soul be gratified with this tribute of Cuhelin!

* * *

When the descriptions in this ancient poem are attentively compared with the incidents of the massacre perpetrated by Hengist, I think no doubt can remain as to the particular event of history to which the Bard refers.

Cuhelyn's design is clearly a tribute of respect to the memory of *Eidiol,* whose history is invariably connected with that of the Saxon chief. He is here described as *high priest,* or president of the *sacred circle,* and as *knight* of the inclosure, who distributed the liquor at the feast, and afterwards preserved the sanctuary.

I shall presently shew, that each of these particulars is fully confirmed by the strains of Aneurin; from which we also learn, that the feast was celebrated, and the horrid deed perpetrated, in a suite of temporary buildings, upon the *Ystre,* or *Cursus,* into which one of the avenues leads from the great temple. "This (Cursus) is half a mile "North from Stonehenge, ten thousand feet, or two miles "long, inclosed by two ditches, three hundred and fifty "feet asunder."* Here was the precinct of *Iôr,* the fair *quadrangular area* of the *great sanctuary of the dominion. Iôr* is a name sometimes applied to the Supreme Being, but borrowed from British mythology, where it seems to have meant the *sun—moving within his orbit,* or *circle.*

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* Ind. Antiq. Vol. VI. p. 128.

Both in name and character, this British divinity seems to be closely allied to the *Orus* of Egypt, "The supposed "son of Isis, who was an emblem of the ark, that receptacle, which was styled the mother of mankind. He is "represented as undergoing, from the Titans, all that "Osiris suffered from Typhon; and the history, at the bottom, is the same. Hence it is said of Isis, that she had "the power of making people immortal; and that, when "she found her son *Orus* in the midst of the waters, dead "through the malice of the Titans, she not only gave "him a renewal of life, but also conferred upon him immortality."*

"Both Orus and Osiris were styled Heliadæ, and often "represented as the sun himself."†.

The identity of Ceridwen and Isis, as to general character, has been already shewn; and as we find, that the former was present in this circle by the name of *Lleddv Ogyrven*, the *gentle goddess*, so Iôr seems to have been a name of her *recovered son*, *Avagddu*.

Geoffry of Monmouth's *Choir Gaur*, or more accurately, *Côr Gawr, the great circle, or sanctuary*, has been often quoted by antiquaries, as the British name of this fabric of *Stonehenge*. In this poem of Cuhelyn, we have not only *Mawr Côr*, which is exactly synonymous with the other, but *Mawr Côr Cyvoeth*, the *great circle, or sanctuary of the dominion*, implying its prerogative, as the metropolitan temple of the Britons; which fully comes up to the idea of Dr. *Stukeley* and Mr. *Maurice*.

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* Bryant's Analysis, V. II. p. 327, 330.

† Ibid. p. 394.

That a heathen temple should be deemed to retain such a prerogative in the middle of the fifth century, must be regarded as a singular fact. But the populace of Britain had not hitherto been radically converted from their national superstition; and in this age, pelagianism, which blended much of that superstition with a few shreds of christianity, was very prevalent amongst them.

Aneurin, as well as our present author, speaks of the murder of a *Bard,* as the first act of open outrage committed at the feast. This victim is here described as *indwelling,* or resident in the temple. He is styled the *illustrious president of song,* and the *minister* of *Buddud,* the same, I presume, as *Buddug,* the *goddess of victory.*

Upon the whole, we have, in this little poem, a full acknowledgement of the dignity of the venerable pile of Stonehenge, and a direct testimony of its consecration to several known objects of superstition, amongst the heathen Britons.

I must now hasten to prepare the reader for the other British document, which I promised upon the same subject. This is no other than the celebrated *Gododin,* a work of about nine hundred lines, composed by *Aneurin,* a *Northumbrian Briton.* It will be necessary to introduce this work, with some prefatory observations.

Mr. Turner, in his *Vindication,* has fully ascertained the facts, *that* such a Bard as Aneurin did live between the years 500 and 600, and *that* the Gododin is his genuine production. The great antiquary, Edward Llwyd, dates the composition, *An.* 510.

An historical poem of that age, composed by an individual of a British *tribe,* which for a thousand years has ceased to exist, may surely be deemed in itself a subject of curiosity. This circumstance, together with the high importance which the English antiquaries attach to the structure of Stonehenge, will, I trust, apologize for the necessary length of the present article.

The name of the *Gododin* is not new to the public. Several translated specimens of it have appeared, and some of these allured the lofty muse of *Gray.* The work has been pronounced a *noble heroic poem,* and the subject is said to have been a disastrous action, in which the author himself bore a part. But the work has been *celebrated,* more than *studied.* Not one of its admirers, that I know of, has attempted to identify the event, which constitutes its principal subject; or has even suspected that it alludes to the actions of Hengist, or to the massacre at Stonehenge: so that I must either establish my proposition, that such is the main business of the poem, or else expect some severe chastisement from the modern critics of my country.

For the imperfection of the view which has hitherto been taken of this work, I may account upon many scores. The poem is ancient, and wholly unattended with explanatory notes. The subject has not much local connexion with the affairs of Wales, and consequently has excited but little inquiry amongst the natives, the only people who understand the language of the Bard. The orthography is obsolete; and the author's dialect had some original variation from that of any *Welsh* tribe. The Bard seldom introduces the proper names of his heroes; but, as it is usual in *popular* songs, and especially *political* songs, composed in troublesome times, generally describes them by characteristical epithets, which, however obvious they may have been in the days of the author, are now become much less so by the lapse of ages. All these circumstances conspire to draw a veil of obscurity over a work, which is viewed through the medium of thirteen centuries. And this obscurity is abundantly increased by the bad preservation of the text. Of this, no greater proof need be given, than a mere exhibition of the various readings, which nearly equal the number of lines.

These, for the most part, are only *orthographical.* They seem to have arisen from the misapprehension of the characters, or letters, of some *one* copy, which was either antiquated or defaced. But this supposed original of the modern transcribers, was evidently imperfect; for all the known copies agree in exhibiting certain passages in mere fragments, without connection of sense or metre.

Such are the reasons why the Gododin has not hitherto been translated entire, or even perfectly understood.

But where am I to ground my own pretensions, as an interpreter of this difficult work? I can only say, in answer to this query, that over and above the share which the *Gododin* has obtained in my general attention to the Bards, I have had occasion to transcribe the whole three times over; and once very lately, from a good copy on vellum, written apparently about the year 1200, and which was not used by the editors of the Archaiologia. I have also reduced all the author's words into alphabetical order, with a reference to the lines in which they occur. This labour rendered Aneurin's expressions and phrases familiar to me, gave me a facility in comparing part with part, and suggested a reference, whenever I met with a passage in any other Bard, which seemed to bear upon the subject of the Gododin. And as all the parts of the work are not equally obscure, I now began to understand passages of considerable length, and to fix some leading marks, as so many clues to the investigation of the general subject.

Thus prepared, I went over the whole Gododin, line by line, with Mr. Owen's Dictionary at my elbow, setting down the literal construction, as nearly as it could be obtained, however incoherent it might appear. And in revising my papers, I plainly perceived, that this work cannot be regarded as a *single poem*, composed upon any *one* determinate plan; but that, on the contrary, it consists of a series of short detached songs, relating principally to one great subject, which is taken up and dismissed in one of those detached parts, and again resumed in another. This discrimination agrees with the title of the work, in the very ancient copy upon vellum, described by Edward Llwyd,* where it is called *Y Gododynne*, in the plural number—*The Gododins*. In the preface to the *Incantation* of Cynvelyn, and of Maelderw,† this work is described as a *series* of *Odleu a Chanuau, odes and songs;* and it is intimated, that they originally amounted to *tri chanu a thriugaint a thrichant*, 363 *songs*. In the old and valuable copy, lately communicated to me by my excellent friend, Mr. Jones,‡ what now remains of the work is divided into ninety-four parts, ornamented with large initials, in green and red alternately. And the idea of the detached nature of these songs, is confirmed by the author himself, who tells us, that it was his custom to compose a *Cenig, sonnet*, or *short song* of the Gododin, to amuse the nightly horrors of a solitary prison.

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* Archæol. Britan. p. 262.

† W. Archaiol. V. I. p. 61.

‡ The learned author of the History of Brecknockshire.

I also perceived that the great catastrophe, which the Bard deplores in most of the remaining songs, was not, as it has been generally represented, *the fall of* 360 *nobles in the field of battle, to which they had rushed forth in a state of intoxication,* but *the massacre of* 360 *unarmed* BRITISH *nobles, in time of peace, and at a feast, where they had been arranged promiscuously with armed* SAXONS.

An event of this kind cannot be supposed to have wholly escaped the notice of history: yet it is clear, that neither history nor tradition, whether British or Saxon, has preserved the slightest hint of any such thing having happened in this island in the sixth century, or in any other period of the British annals, excepting in one instance, namely, the *massacre of the Britons at Stonehenge,* about the year 472.

The memory of this event is familiar to the historians of both nations; and we shall find by the sequel, that the Bard confirms most of the incidents which have been recorded. This is, therefore, the identical catastrophe which Aneurin deplores.

But will this decision correspond with the age of Aneurin?

The Bard represents himself as having been present at the bloody spectacle; and Edward Llwyd refers the era of the Gododin to the year 510, and this, probably, upon the authority of the ancient MS. which he quotes in the same passage.

Here is no discordance of dates, which may not be fairly reconciled. There is no improbability in Aneurin's having attended the feast, as a *young Bard*, in 472, and his having bewailed the friends of his youth thirty-eight years afterwards, when, as an *old, unfortunate warrior*, he had fallen into the hands of the foe, and was confined in a dreary dungeon.

And indeed, it appears evidently from the face of the work, that the events which the Bard commemorates, had preceded the date of the composition by a long interval of years; for he supports the credit of the circumstances which he details—by the relation of a Briton, who had escaped—by the particulars which were known to *Taliesin*—by the oral testimony of some *old chiefs*—and by the authority of certain songs, which had been composed upon the occasion. He also touches upon the affairs of those eventful times, which had succeeded the fatal feast. So that, upon the whole, it is clear, that an interval of thirty or forty years must have elapsed between the woful subject of Aneurin's songs, and the date of their composition.

When we have made due allowance for this interval, we must necessarily carry back the catastrophe, which the Bard deplores, from the date of the composition in 510, into the age of Hengist, and fix it, with the greatest appearance of accuracy, at the era of the celebrated massacre at Stonehenge. And to the circumstances which history records of this event, the allusions of the Bard so precisely and exclusively apply, that it is impossible to refer them to any other event.

This is my decided opinion. I foresee, however, a few objections, which it may be proper to obviate.

It will be asked—Why has not the Bard mentioned *Hengist,* and his *British* partizans, *by name?* To this it may be answered, that Aneurin, at the time when he composed most of his songs, was a prisoner of war in the hands of the Saxons. The introduction of names might have subjected him to personal danger: he therefore chose the safer way of gratifying his resentment, by giving such bold hints of the affairs, and the individuals to which he alluded, that they could not be mistaken; and this method afforded him an opportunity of painting his indignation more forcibly, by sarcastic epithets, than he could have done it by explicit attacks upon the person of Hengist.

Against the locality of Aneurin's subject, as referred to the temple of Stonehenge, it may be objected, that the term *Gododin, in Nennius,* implies the region of the *Ottadini,* between the rampart of Antonine, and the wall of Severus: whilst in several passages of this poem, we find that Gododin means the same as *Cattraeth,* the place where the nobles assembled at the feast, and where they fell.

This is certainly an ambiguity; and it was probably intended as such, for the same prudential reason which I have mentioned above. But if we attend to the *composition,* and the *actual application* of the name, we shall find that it furnished a fair opportunity for a double interpretation.

Godo is *a partial covering,* and *Din* a *fence* or *outwork* As applied to the region of the Ottadini, it means that district which is *partly covered* or protected by the Northern *rampart;* and the word is equally descriptive of the British temples or sanctuaries, which were *open at top,* yet protected by a surrounding rampart or bank.

And that the name of *Godo* was *actually* appropriated to these temples, we have already seen, in treating of the family of the British Ceres: for *Seithin Saidi, Janus* or *Saturn,* the representative of the patriarch, is styled *Porthawr Godo,* the *guardian of the gate of Godo,* or the *uncovered sanctuary.*

Cattraeth, or, according to the older orthography, *Catraith,* is liable to the same objection, and admits of the same solution. This name has some similarity to *Catarick,* near Richmond, in Yorkshire, the *Cataracton* of the ancients. Yet it is not hence to be suspected, that by *Gododin* and *Cattraeth,* our author meant to point out an *Ottadinian* town of that name; for Cataracton was not within, or very near the borders of the Ottadini; so that some other meaning must be sought.

In the preceding section, to which I have just referred, it is remarked, that the same *Seithin Saidi* had a son, named *Cadeiriaith,* the *language of the chair or presidency;* and also *Cadraith* or *Catraith,* which seems to be only a contraction of the former. This mythological character certainly represents the *laws,* &c. of the Druids, pronounced from the *chair* of presidency, or *Bardic cathedral,* hence figuratively applied to the great temple itself. And, from many passages of Aneurin's work, it is evident that this is the precise import of his *Catraith.*

Having, as I have already stated, obtained such a general view of the nature and subject of the Gododin, as enabled me to estimate the value of most of the various readings, I sat down patiently to re-translate the whole as closely as possible, without sacrificing perspicuity to the mere idiom of my author, and with the most minute attention to Mr. Owen's explanation of obsolete words, even in those passages which seemed most intelligible. And, I think, I have made out Aneurin's meaning with tolerable clearness, considering the nature of the work, and the state of the copy; though it may be admitted as probable, that a careful examination of our *original* historians would reflect some additional light upon several passages.

I had some thoughts of adding the British text, as accurately as it can be obtained, from a collation of the various copies; but as it is of considerable length, I have omitted it, in compassion to the English reader.

The division of the *songs* in this work, was the result of my own observation and conjecture; and therefore, though it be generally confirmed by Mr. Jones's ancient copy, I submit it to the censure of the critical reader, who, by passing over that division, may read the Gododin as one entire poem.

THE GODODIN.

SONG I.

" GREDYF GWR OED GWAS."*—W. Archaiol. p. 1.

Aneurim commemorates the young Bard, his Associate, whom Hengist had slain at the Feast. See the Poem of Cuhelyn, in the former Part of the Section, and No. 16 *and* 25, *of the present Series.*

MANLY was the soul of the youth, whose merit I record with sorrow. A swift thick-maned steed was under the thigh of the fair youth. His shield, light and broad, hung upon the slender courser. His *blue* and *unspotted weapon* was the assuager of tumult.†

With me shall remain no hatred towards thee. I will do better for thee—in poetry will I praise thee. The floor will be stained with blood, before thou shalt enjoy the genial feast. The raven shall have his food, before thou wilt lift the hostile spear, O *Owen*, my dear companion!

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* Gredyf gwr oed gwas,
Gwrhyt a'm dias.

† The *clean weapon* of the Bard, like the *Hasta Pura* of the Romans, seems to have been an emblem of peace.—The Bards were regarded as heralds of peace.—See song 25, where this Bard is introduced by the name of *Owen.*
For *Ethy aur a Phan,* I read
Ethyawr Aphan,

There is sorrow in the plain, where the son of Marro was slaughtered!

SONG II.

" CAEAWC CYNHAIAWC."—p. 1.

The Bard descants upon the Manners of Hengist, and touches upon some Particulars of the Plot, which he appears to have concerted, in Part, with Vortigern, the British King.

Adorned with his wreath,* the chief of the rustics announced, that upon his arrival, unattended by his host, and in the presence of the *Maid*,† he would give the mead; but he would strike the front of his shield,‡ if he heard the din of war, and to those whom he pursued, he would give no quarter.

But against those who would not retreat from battle, till their blood flowed like rivulets—against the heroes who would not give way, he cherished a dark resentment. The man of Gododin, upon his return before the tents of Madawc, has reported but one man in a hundred, who escaped from the hand of the water-dweller.[*]

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* *Caeawc, wearing a wreath*—This was a wreath of amber beads, as appears from the subsequent paragraphs, which also prove that the Bard means Hengist. I recollect no authority for ascribing wreaths of amber to the native Britons; but the *costume* appears upon many of the old Saxon coins, published by Camden.

† *Bûn*, the *maid*, a name of *Llywy*, the British Proserpine, at whose festivals contention and tumult were deemed sacrilegious. See song 25.

‡ The phrase, *Twl tal y rodawc* repeatedly occurs. It has been translated, " the front of whose shield was pierced;" but it evidently implies, *making a signal*, by striking the shield.

Adorned with his wreath, the chief of the halberds which oppress the natives, like an eagle, rushed into our harbours when invited.[†] His compact[‡] took effect. His signal[§] was duly observed. He had devised a *better* stratagem.[||] Here, his party did not shrink, though they had fled before the army of Gododin.[¶] The water-dweller boldly invites us to a mixed assembly, where neither spear nor shield[**] was to be admitted——"Thus there could be no strife "amongst the jovial company: the heroes would be pre- "served from a sudden stroke."

Adorned with a wreath was the leader of the *sea-drifted*

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[*] The Bard describes the Saxons, in this work, by several terms, which imply *sea rovers. Ar law 'r Mordei.*

[†] The Saxons were invited, the first time, by *Vortigern,* and afterwards by *Rowena.*

[‡] The compact of a friendly meeting, proposed by Hengist.

[§] The signal for a general massacre of the unsuspecting British nobles.

[||] His *first* stratagem was the marriage of his daughter; his *better* stratagem, the *massacre.*

[¶] That is, before the forces of Vortimer, a votary of *Godo,* the British Ceres.

[**] The Bard continually reminds us, that the Britons had neither offensive nor defensive arms. In song 27, he mentions the plea of the Saxons, for the exclusion of *shields—That there might be a clear space to light the area.* The conclusion of this paragraph, contains a suggestion of Hengist, which is well explained by Mr. Warrington, p. 59. "And in order to banish every idea "of hostile intention, it was artfully suggested by the Saxon, that both par- "ties should appear without their arms."

wolves:[*] and of amber was that wreath which twined about his temples. Precious was the amber which could merit such a feast. The haughty[†] chief excludes men of a humble station, though *Gwynedd* and the *North* might have come to his share, with the concurrence of the son of partition[‡]—the prince with the broken shield.

The leader, adorned with his wreath, is armed like a hero. The general mark of his vengeance is the man who had been firm in the bloody field; but the part which he selects for himself, is to give the first thrust to the conductor of the host,[‖] before whose blades five bands had fallen—even of the dreadful men of Deira and Bernicia, twenty hundred had perished in an hour.[§] And as food for wolves is sooner provided than a nuptial feast; as ravens may be furnished with prey, before the funeral bier arrive; so the blood of our hero stains the floor before he lifts the spear:

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[*] Kaeawc kynhorawc bleid e maran—Mr. Jones' MS. "Adorned with his "wreath was the chief, even the wolf of the holme," i. e. Thanet.

[†] None but men of the most distinguished rank and character were admitted to the fatal banquet. And of those, the heroes who had fought under Vortimer, were especially selected for destruction, by the united treachery of Vortigern and Hengist. These were the great objects of resentment to both parties. The British King regarded them as the supporters of a rebellious son; and they had expelled the Saxon from the Island of Britain.

[‡] Vortigern, who had divided his kingdom with Hengist.

[‖] Cynod, yw y gwr gwrd eg gwyawr;
Cynran, yn racwan racbydinawr.

[§] The Scots and Picts united their forces with the Saxons, who were stationed in the North; and their combined army was beaten by the lieutenants of Vortimer. *Warrington,* with his authorities, p. 52, 53.

yet the lofty Kyneid* shall be renowned, whilst a single Bard remains.

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SONG III.

"GWYR A AETH ODODIN."—p. 2.

The Bard deplores the Fate of the Heroes, who had fallen at the Feast, and touches upon some of the great Actions which they had performed under Vortimer.

THE heroes went to Gododin cheerful and sprightly, whilst he, the bitter warrior, was disposing his blades† in order. A short season of peace had they enjoyed.‡ The son of *Botgat*§ gave them flattering language—his hand explained the meaning! They should have gone to churches to do penance—the old and the young, the bold and the powerful—the inevitable strife of death is piercing them.‖

The heroes went to Gododin—The insulting chief kindled in the assembly, an irresistible conflict. They were slain with blades, and without din, whilst the princely supporter of the living law was making an atonement.*

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* *The Man of Kent*—Probably the British Prince whom Vortigern had dispossessed of his dominions, to make room for Hengist. This chief is introduced again, under the name of *Tudvwlch*.

† The *Seaxes*, which Hengist's party privately wore at the feast.

‡ From the expulsion of the Saxons by Vortimer, to the period of Hengist's return—about two years and a half.

§ Botgat or *Votgas*—Hengist's father, whom the Saxons call *Wetgisse*.

‖ Death was *inevitable*, because the *unarmed* Britons were ranked alternately with *armed* Saxons—The next paragraph describes not a *battle*, but a sudden *massacre*.

The heroes went to Cattraeth—loquacious was their assemblage. Pale mead was their liquor, and it became their poison.

Three hundred with effective weapons, were set in array:† and after their noisy mirth—what a silence ensued! They should have gone to churches to do penance: the inevitable strife of death is piercing them.

The heroes went to Cattraeth—They drank the intoxicating mead. Brave and prosperous had they been. I should wrong them, were I to neglect their fame! Amidst blades, red, tremendous, and murky; incessantly, and obstinately, would the dogs of battle fight.‡—" (O Saxons) had I " judged you to be favourers of the Bernician clan,§ like " a deluge, I would not have left a man of you alive!"—My companion I lost, when I was secure. Successfully had he withstood the terror of the usurper: the magnanimous hero had disallowed the endowment of the *father-in-law*[*]—Such was the son of Cian, from the stone of Gwyngwn.

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* It appears from the subsequent parts of the Gododin, that this *interposer* was the celebrated Eidiol, a distinguished prince, and president of the Bardic community; or, as he was styled in that wretched age of the British church, *Bishop* of the Britons. Upon this woful occasion, he acted as *Seneschal*, or Governor of the feast. He is to be regarded as Aneurin's hero; and from the particulars recorded of him, I conclude he is the same prince who is called *Aurelius Ambrosius*, *Gwrawl Emrys*, or hero of the ambrosial stones.

† That is, the retinue of Hengist, who privately wore their *Seaxes* or daggers.

‡ They had fought thus, in the wars of Vortimer.

§ Whether this apostrophe is to be understood, as coming from the Bard himself, or from some more warlike chief; its object is to reproach the Saxons for their treacherous combination with the *Picts*.

The heroes went to Cattraeth with the dawn. They were afflicted in time of peace, by those who had dreaded them.[†]

A hundred thousand[‡] were the adversaries of three hundred, who uttered the groan of woe, stained with their own blood, when he,[§] the most terrible, *manfully* stood up, before the retinue of the most courteous mountain chief.[‖]

The heroes went to Cattraeth with the dawn. Respected is their memory amongst their connexions. They drank the yellow, delicious, and potent mead, in that year, when many a Bard fell to the ground.[¶] Redder than purple were the blades of the foe; their white-sheathed piercers, and their four-pointed helmets, before the retinue of the most courteous mountain chief.

The heroes went to Cattraeth with the day. (Was there not a disparagement of battles!) They had made, indeed, a mighty carnage.* Effectually had the gem of Christianity wielded his protecting blade. This is most meet, before men have engaged in friendly compact. However great the bloody destruction which they had occasioned, when the day was decided before the army of Gododin, was it not done under the conduct of the magnanimous leader!

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[*] This *endowment* was the kingdom of Kent, which Vortigern formally bestowed upon Hengist, his *father-in-law*, when he married Rowena.

[†] They were massacred at an ostensively peaceful meeting, by the united plot of Hengist and Vortigern, to whom they had been equally formidable.

[‡] An exaggerated number, implying the whole combined party of Vortigern and Hengist.

[§] Hengist, who arose to give the signal of death.

[‖] The retinue of Vortigern, who was Lord of North Wales, a mountainous region—his great *courtesy* for the Saxons was a subject of indignation to the Britons.

[¶] After the execution of Hengist's plot, the Bards defended the temple against the Saxons, where many of them must have fallen.

To the hero who went to Cattraeth with the day, or drank the white mead, in the celebration of *May eve*,† dismal was the preconcerted signal of the associated chief, which he had given in secret charge, through the excess of soaring ambition.

SONG IV.

" NI CHRYSIUS GATTRAETH."—p. 2.

In this Song, and the next following, the Bard still dwelling upon the Subject of the calamitous Feast, intermixes some Particulars of the Bravery and Fate of a Chief whom he calls Tudvwlch, *which implies* a Breach *in* the Land. *By this singular Epithet, he seems to describe the Prince, whose Territories Vortigern had seized, and bestowed upon Hengist.*

To Cattraeth, there hastened not a hero, whose standard had displayed such magnificence of enterprize; nor has the circle of Eidin (the living one) produced a scatterer of the ravagers, equally great with the lofty *Tudvwlch,* who being deprived of his lands and towns, had slaughtered the Saxons for seven days. His valour ought to have protected him in freedom. Dear is his memory amongst his illustrious associates.

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* That is, in the wars of Vortimer, to which the Bard alludes, in the conclusion of the paragraph.

† *Meinoethydd*—This was the anniversary of the great mysteries of the Britons, as we have already seen in *Hanes Taliesin.* And it was the season appointed by Vortigern and Hengist. for the solemn meeting. Warrington, p. 57.

When Tudvwlch, the supporter of the land, came to the feast, the area of the son of harmony* was made a plain of blood.

The heroes went to Cattraeth with the dawn.—Ah! none of them had the protection of shields †—When they had hastened to the *Crai,* ‡ assembled in gleaming arms, loud as the tumult of thunder, was the din of their shields.

The ambitious man, the fickle man, and the base man—he would tear them with his pikes and halberds.—Standing upon higher ground, he would gash them with his blades; but to the grief of the steel-clad commander, the water-dwellers were subdued by the proprietor of the land. Before Erthai, the warrior groaned.

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* Mab *Eilydd*—This was the area of the Bards, or the *Cursus,* in front of their great temple, which was the scene of the massacre.

† Of these they were disarmed by the stratagem of Hengist.

‡ This probably means the bloody battle of *Cray*-ford, in which those heroes, under the conduct of Vortimer, had fought with Hengist, four or five years before the massacre. In that engagement, both parties seem to have claimed the victory.—See Gibson's *Camden,* Col. 224. *Sammes,* p. 390.

SONG V.

"O VREITHELL GATTRAETH."—p. 3.

Vortigern is here implicated in the Guilt and Disgrace of the Massacre.

Of the mixed assembly of Cattraeth, when the tale is told, the natives are afflicted.—Long has their sorrow continued! There was a dominion without a sovereign, and a smoaking land.* Yet the sons of Godebawg,† an iniquitous tribe, would obstinately support the *secret inviter* of the great slaughterer. Dismal was the fate of dire necessity, which was decreed for Tudvwlch, and the lofty Cyvwlch.

Together they drank the transparent mead, by the light of torches: though it was pleasant to the taste, it produced a lasting abhorrence.

He‡ had previously stationed above Caer Echinig, the youthful heroes of a chief, who was in his retinue. He had previously ordered a horn to be filled on the *Bludwe*, that he might pledge the water-dweller. He had directed that the beverage should consist of mead and beer (Bragawd). He had previously ordered the display of gold and rich purple. He had given orders for pampered steeds, which might carry him safe away, whilst *Gwarthlev* and *Enovryd* were pouring forth the liquor. Previous to this, the benefactor whom the ebbing tide had left us,* gave out his private signal—a command which concerned, those, who had been loath to retreat.

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* This alludes to the dreadful ravages committed by Hengist, after the massacre.—See *Warrington*, p. 60.

† The princely descendants of Coel *Godebawg* supported the cause of Vortigern, who had *invited* Hengist into Britain.

‡ That is Vortigern, "the Inviter of the great slaughterer." It appears from this, and other passages, that Vortigern was privy to the design of massacre, which he had encouraged, in order to get rid of those counsellors and heroes who had supported the cause of his son Vortimer, and might still be suspected of an intention to elect another sovereign. It is probable, however, that the British King was not aware of Hengist's design to seize his person, and extort from him a large portion of his dominions, as the price of liberty.

SONG VI.

" ANAWR GYNHORUAN."—p. 3.

This little Song, which seems to want the Conclusion, is unconnected with the preceding Subject. It appears evidently, to be an Elegy upon the Death of the victorious Vortimer, who had driven the Saxons out of the Country, and was afterwards poisoned in the Court of Vortigern, by the Contrivance of Rowena, the Daughter of Hengist.

AND now the lofty leader, the sun, is about to ascend :† the sovereign most glorious, the Lord of the British Isle.

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* That is Hengist, who, by hastening the execution of his plot, prevented the meditated retreat of Vortigern.

† This, I conceive, is not to be understood literally, as a hymn to the sun—the Bard is only comparing Vortimer to the *sun*, whom the mystical Bards acknowledged as a divinity.
For *Nêv*, heaven, I read *Nâv*, a Lord.

Direful was the flight, before the shaking of his shield, hastening to victory.

But there was an unkind cup in the court of Eiddin:* with ostentatious courtesy, the hero was invited to taste the generous liquor. The beverage of wine he drank in the festival of the reaping. Though the wine which he quaffed was transparent, it had assumed the form of deadly poison.

We have a slaughtering harvest—the slaughter of the illustrious chief. We raised the song of death—the death of the armed hero—the death of the winged one, whose shield had not been withheld from the spears of battle.† The pre-occupiers fell in the dreadful conflict. Determined was his signal of attack, and decisive the orders which he issued. Without disparagement, he retaliated upon the foe, before the green sod covered the grave of the great and blessed hero.

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* *Eiddin*, he who extorts property or possession—an epithet applied to the *usurper* Vortigern, in whose court Vortimer received a poisoned cup, by the contrivance of Rowena.

† The Bard alludes to the actions of Vortimer, previous to his fall.

SONG VII.

“TEITHI AMGANT.”—p. 4.

In this Place, there is a Chasm in the Original. Its Extent is not known. The following Enumeration must be referred to the Middle of the fifth Century, when the Saxons served as mercenary Troops under Vortigern.

THE complement of the borders were three moving bands—five battalions of five hundred men each—three levies of three hundred each—three hundred warlike knights of Eiddyn,[*] arrayed in gilded armour—three loricated bands, with three commanders, wearing gold chains—three adventurous knights, with three hundred of equal quality. These three bands, of the same order, were mutually jealous in their bitter and impetuous assaults on the foe—they were equally dreadful in the conflict: they would strike a lion flat as lead. Gold had collected all these for warfare.[†]

There came also three princes of the land, who were native Britons—Cinric and Cenon, of the stock of Aeron,[‡] to oppose the ashen spears of the men who dropped into

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[*] Vortigern, as above. It appears that this bloody usurper, who owed his elevation to the murder of his lawful sovereign, and the violence of a party, was diffident of the native Britons, and kept a body-guard of three hundred Saxon horse.

[†] It seems by this paragraph, that the Saxon mercenaries of Vortigern amounted to about 5000.

[‡] *Aëron*, the *Splendid* one, or the Queen of Brightness; a name of one of the great luminaries, venerated by the superstitious Britons.

Dëira.[*] And there came from amongst the Britons, a man who was better than Cenon—even he who proved a serpent to the sullen foes.[†]

SONG VIII.

" YVEIS Y WÎN A MED.—p. 4.

The Bard resumes the Subject of the disastrous Feast.

I DRANK of the wine and the mead of the water-dweller, with the huge amber beads.[‡] In the assembly of social men, it was his glory to make food for eagles. When he hastened to rouse at once his fell associates—before he gave the signal[§] at the early dawn, he left the shields[||] of split wood at a distance—short-tearing weapons[¶] (he knew) would cut their way.

Before the assault, the points of sprigs had been broken[**]

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[*] That is, the Picts.

[†] The third and principal hero, who is described, and not named, was probably Eidiol, the Bard's peculiar favourite.

[‡] Hengist, with his wreath of amber round his temples.—See song 2.

[§] " Now, with your seaxes!"—The signal which Hengist had previously agreed upon with his assassins.

[||] This particular of the plot has been already noticed.

[¶] The *seax* had a sharp edge on one side; but the other side was frequently cut into teeth, like a saw. Sammes, p. 413.

[**] The *breaking of sprigs*, so frequently mentioned by the Bards, describes the practice of sortilege. It seems, from this passage, that the diviner, either from his lots, or private conjecture, had conceived some presentiment of the event.

by the son of Semno, the Diviner, who knew, that he who had sold his life would cut with sharp blades. He should have declared this openly, then he would have been slain with pointed weapons.

Notwithstanding his friendly covenant,* he was meditating a convenient attack. He had boasted of the carcasses of brave and powerful men, whom he would pierce in the presence of *Gwynedd*.†

" I drank of the wine and the mead of the water-dweller,
" and because I had drunk, I made a stroke with a small
" piercing blade."‡——" It was not thy excess of drinking
" which emboldened the fell chief: when every one made a
" stroke, thou didst the same. But when the issue comes,
" it would have been well for thee not to have offended: the
" present rewarder of your deed§ has displayed a mighty
" and dreadful arm."

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* Hengist's proposal of a friendly meeting, for the ostensible purpose of settling all disputes.

† That is, *Vortigern*, Lord of *Gwynedd*, or North Wales. Golyddan, a Bard of the seventh century, emphatically styles him *Gwrtheyrn Gwynedd*.—W. Archaiol, p. 156.

‡ This is the apology of a Saxon individual, for his atrocious conduct at the feast: to which the indignant Briton replies—" It was not thy excess," &c.

§ Eidiol, or Ambrosius, who retaliated upon the Saxons by the death of Hengist.

SONG IX.

"GWYR A AETH GATTRAETH."—p. 4.

The Bard, pursuing his Subject, openly charges Vortigern as an Accomplice in Hengist's Plot.

THE heroes who went to Cattraeth were renowned. Wine and mead, from golden cups, was their liquor in the year when we accepted of the dignified man who had been set aside.* Three, and three score, and three hundred were they, wearing gold chains.† Of those who hastened to the excess of liquor, *three* only escaped from the confident stabbing; namely, the two war dogs of Aeron, and our destined governor,‡ and myself, through my streams of blood—the reward of my candid song.

O my friend! O thou who truly condolest with me! We should not have been beaten, but for the instigation of the sovereign, who was twice elevated.§ We should not have been singled out in the court of the mead feast. It was he who made the proscription, in behalf of his convenient friend. Base is he in the field, who is base to his own relatives.* The man of Gododin reports, that after the gashing assault, there was none found more ardent than Llywy.†

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* Blwyddyn yn erbyn urddyn dëawd—

The year when Vortigern, who had *been deposed* for his attachment to the Saxons, was re-elected to the sovereignty, after the death of Vortimer.

† "Above *three hundred* of the British nobility, the most eminent for their "talents in the council, or in the field, perished in this bloody carousal."
Warrington, p. 59, with his numerous authorities.

‡ Eidiol, or Ambrosius.—It is clear to me, that under these two names, we are to contemplate but one historical character. Ambrosius had, therefore, already returned from Armorica, either during the reign of Vortimer, or upon the faith of this friendly meeting. As this prince was a peculiar object of Vortigern's jealousy, his flattering appointment, as governor of the feast, may have been made for the purpose of securing his attendance amongst the destined victims.

§ Vortigern, who had been deposed, and re-elected by his faction. The Bard openly charges this infatuated prince with the odium of the massacre.

SONG X.

“ARF AGGYNNULL.”—p. 4.

This little Dirge may be supposed to have been chaunted over the obtruncated Body of Hengist, when he was taken at the Battle of CAER *Conan,§ and beheaded by the Command of Eidiol, or Ambrosius, the Prince who succeeded Vortigern as King of the Britons.*

HE who now supports no arm, who presents a lacerated form, deprived of motion, has with energy pervaded the land, through the great multitude of the Löegrian tribes.

His shields were extended on the sea coast—his shields, in the battle of pikes. He caused a destruction of men, and multiplied widowed matrons before his death. O vehement son of Hoewgi,§ with thy spears didst thou make an effusion of blood!

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* Vortigern had made his way to the throne by the *base* murder of his *cousin* Constans.—Warrington, p. 39. This paragraph records a more shocking instance of his *baseness.*

† The British Proserpine—here she represents the whole community of Bards—her votaries. See song 25.

‡ See Gibson's Camden Col. 847. Warrington and his authorities, p. 64.

§ Hengist's father, by the Saxons called Wetgisse.

SONG XI.

"ARWR Y DWY YSGWYD."—p. 5.

This Song refers to the Actions of Eidiol, or Ambrosius, subsequent to the Massacre of the British Nobles.*

THE hero of the two shields—winged is his variegated van. It is like the velocity of warlike steeds. In Aervre (the mount of slaughter) there was a din—there was fire! Impetuous were his spears, as the rays of the blazing sun. *There* was food for ravens—there did the raven triumph!

And before the foe was left at large by the eagle's allurer, who delighted in the course, there was scattering on his flanks, and in his front the overwhelming billow! The Bards of the land will judge respecting men of valour.

His counsels were not divulged to slaves.

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* The English historians, the Triads, and the chronicles of Tysilio and Geoffry of Monmouth, represent this prince as having singly attacked the Saxons, and slain an incredible number of them with a pole.

The poems of Aneurin and Cuhelyn reconcile the report of his actions with probability. Having some suspicion of treachery, he takes his station as governor of the feast, and consequently is not involved in the ranks. Upon the first assault, he extends his shaft between the adverse parties, and gives the alarm to the numerous disciples of the Bards, who were celebrating the festivity of May-day, and to the populace, whom the solemnity had convened. Some of this multitude parry off the Saxons with the long poles which were used in the procession, whilst others set fire to the temporary buildings about the Cursus, and seize the arms which had been there deposited.

It was Hengist's plan, immediately after the massacre, to burst into the temple, and plunder its treasures: but his Saxons, being half intoxicated, and only armed with their corslets and short daggers, were thrown into confusion by this subitaneous host of Britons, and by the surrounding flames; so that after some loss, they were compelled to retreat, and, for the present, to postpone the completion of their design.

Devourers were his spears in the hands of heroes. And, before the deed of the lurkers covered him in the grave,* he was a man who had energy in his commands. Buddvan (the horn of victory), the son of the bold Bleiddvan (lofty wolf), washed his armour with gore.

Injurious, most injurious would it be, to neglect the memorial of him, who left not an open gap for cowardice: whose court was not deserted by the beneficent Bards of Britain, upon the calends of January. It was his resolution, that strangers should not plow his land, though it lay waste. Indignantly did he resent the stratagem of the great Dragon,† who was a leader in the field of blood, after the fatal wine had been quaffed by Gwenabwy‡ (the fair corpse), the son of the Lady—the warrior of *Galltraeth.*§

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* Or, before he was buried, after those who laid a plot for his life, had accomplished their design. This obscure sentence alludes to the manner of Ambrosius' death. Eppa, a Saxon physician, treacherously poisoned him, by the instigation of *Pascens,* the son of Vortigern.

See Warrington, and his authorities, p. 65, 66.

† Hengist, who slaughtered the British nobles, and wasted the country, after the death of Vortimer, who had fought at *Galltraeth.*

‡ Vortimer, who was made a corpse, or poisoned, by the contrivance of his *step-mother,* Rowena.

§ *Galltraeth;* the Gallic strand, or shore of the Gallic sea. The Bard describes the battle of Galltraeth, song 14, and ascribes the massacre to the resentment of the Saxons, for the victory which the Britons had obtained in that engagement. Hence it appears, that this was Vortimer's victory, recorded by Nennius, *Ad Lapidem Tituli,* supra *ripam Gallici maris,* where the Saxons were entirely beaten off British ground, and compelled to fly to their ships. Gibson's Camden Col. 243.

Llech Titleu, or *Lapis Tituli,* is substituted for *Galltraeth* in another passage of the Gododin.

SONG XII.

"BU GWÎR MAL Y MEAD Y GATHLEU."—p. 5.

This Song describes the Conduct of Eidiol at the Instant of the Massacre, and furnishes some Hints of his subsequent Actions.

TRUE it was, as the songs* report. No steeds overtook Marchleu† (the splendid knight). The governor extended his spear, before the swordsman,‡ in his thick strewed path. Being educated amongst the sacred mounts, he supported his mystic mother: and severe was the stroke of his protecting blade. A spear, of quartered ash, did he extend from his hand, over the STONE CELL OF THE SACRED FIRE,§ whilst the corn-stacks were made to puff out with smoke, by those who had cut with the blade armfuls of furze.|| Then, as when a reaping comes in doubtful weather, did the splendid knight cause the blood to flow.

From the Southern regions did he send Issac,¶ whose

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* The Bard quotes the authority of songs which had been composed upon the occasion.

† *Marchleu* and the *governor*, refer to Eidiol: for the action described, is that which is expressly and exclusively ascribed to that hero.

‡ The Saxon.

§ These are important hints upon the subject of the Bardic temple.

|| In subsequent passages, the Bard expressly describes Eidiol as involving the Saxons in flames.

¶ A corrupt orthography for *Esca*—" The British prince (Ambrosius) then " laid siege to the city of York, in which place Octa, the son of Hengist, and " *Esca*, his brother, had taken refuge; but these chiefs were soon obliged to " surrender, upon condition that they and the Saxon soldiers should retire " into the country, near Scotland."—Warrington, p. 64.

conduct had been like the inconstant sea: he was full of modesty and gentleness, whilst he regaled himself with mead; but he would possess a territory, from the rampart of *Ofer*, to the point of *Maddeu*—then the savage was glutted with carnage, the scatterer with desolation. On the heads of mothers did his sword resound!

Our hero was a Murgreid (mighty spirit)—praise be to him, the son of Gwyddneu![*]

SONG XIII.

" CAREDIG CARADWY E GLOD.—p. 5.

We are here presented with a striking Contrast, in the Characters of two Heroes, who fell at the fatal Feast. The former was, probably, Caredig, *the Son of* Cunedda, *who possessed a District in* Cardiganshire, *which, from him, was called* Caredigiawn, *whence the English name of the County. The second seems to have been* Caradog with the brawny Arm, *a celebrated Cornish Prince of the fifth Century.*

CAREDIG—lovely is his fame! He protects and guards his appointed spot. Calm is he, and gentle, before he comes into the field. Does he give battle! He is brave with discretion. The friend of harmonious song—may he arrive in the celestial region, and recognise his home!

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[*] The *Hydranos* of the British mysteries.—See the third section of this Essay. Eidiol, or Ambrosius, was his mystical son, or an adept in the Bardic mysteries.

Caredig, the amiable chief, leading in the tumultuous battle, with his golden shield, he marshalled his camp. Lances are darted and shivered into splinters, and penetrating is the stroke of the unrelenting sword. Like a hero, he still maintains his post. Before he was laid on the earth—before the afflictive shock, he had fulfilled his duty in guarding his station. May he find a complete reception with the Trinity, in perfect unity![*]

When Caradoc rushed into battle, like a wild boar, he cut his way, and burst forward. In the mangling fight, he was the BULL of the host. The wild dogs were allured by the motion of his hand. For this, I have the testimony of Ewein, the son of Eulat, and Gurien, and Gwyn, and Guriat. But though, from Galltraeth, from the mangling fight, and from Bryn Hydwn, he returned safe,[†] yet after the clear mead was put into his hand, the hero saw his father no more.

SONG XIV.

"GWYR A GRYSSIASANT."—p. 6.

The Bard commemorates several of the Nobles who had been slain at the Feast, and celebrates the Heroism which they had displayed in the Battle of Galltraeth.

THE heroes who hastened to the feast, had moved forth unanimously, even the short-lived heroes who were intoxicated over the clarified mead, the retinue of the mountain chief—men who had been illustrious in the hour of trial.

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[*] From this single passage, it appears that, amongst all his heathenish mythology, the Bard acknowledged some genuine tenets of Christianity.

[†] He had returned in safety from the wars of Vortimer; but he did not escape from the fatal banquet.

As the price of their mead in the banquet, their lives were paid by Caradoc and Madoc, Pyll and Ieuan, Peredur with steel arms, Gwawrddur and Aeddan, who had escaped from the tumultuous fight with a broken shield. Though they had slain the foe, they also were slain: none of them returned to their peaceful home.

The heroes who hastened to the feast, were entertained together on that year,* over the mead of the great designers.† Those deplorable wretches! how doleful their commemoration! the bane of the land to which they had returned! ‡ By mothers they were not nursed! How lasting the resentment and the grief they occasioned! After men had acted bravely—at the moment when they were regaling with mead, the dank floor of Gododin § receives our vigorous heroes. This was occasioned by the choice liquor of the mountain chief, and the resentment of the victory which they had purchased at Galltraeth.||

These men had gone to Galltraeth to battle, as heroes,

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* The year of Vortigern's re-elevation to the sovereignty. See before.

† Vortigern and the Saxons.

‡ The Saxons had been utterly expelled by Vortimer; and again, they returned to Britain upon the restoration of Vortigern.

§ Here Gododin is evidently a name of the great sanctuary, where the massacre was perpetrated.

|| Vortimer's last victory, supra *ripam Gallici maris*, was the great occasion of Hengist's resentment. The Bard now proceeds to describe the bravery which his heroes had displayed in that decisive action.

with the force of warlike steeds, and red armour and shields, and uplifted spears, and sharp lances, and glittering mail, and swords.—They had excelled—they had penetrated through the host—before their blades five battalions had fallen. The lofty Rhuvawn[*] had given gold to the altar; and to the Bard, munificent, honorary rewards.

SONG XV.

"NY WNAETHPWYD NEUADD."—p. 6.

The Bard speaks of the great Temple, in the Precincts of which the fatal Banquet was celebrated. He recites the heroic Acts of Eidiol, or Ambrosius, who is described by a Variety of Epithets; and touches upon some Particulars of the Retaliation of the Britons, at the Battle of Maes Beli.

A STRUCTURE[†] was not formed so eminently perfect, so great, so magnificent, for the conflict of swords.

In the place where *Morien* merited the sacred fire, it cannot be denied that corpses were seen, by the wearer of scaly mail,[‡] who was harnessed, and armed with a piercing weapon, but covered with the skin of a beast. His sword resounded upon the head of the chief singer of Nöe and Eseye,* at the *great stone fence of their common sanctuary.*—Never more did the child of *Teithan* move.

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[*] Rhuvawn, the same as Elphin, the Solar Divinity, or his *priest.*

[†] The account of the great temple, in this song, deserves the attention of the antiquary. In the passage before us, we are told that it was not *made for strife*—being the sanctuary of the pacific Bards and Druids.—Here, also, was the *cell of the sacred fire,* mentioned in a preceding paragraph.

[‡] Hengist, who began his outrage, by killing the Bard.

This hall would not have been made so impregnable, had not Morien† been equal to Caradoc. He did not retreat with sorrow towards Mynawc.‡—Enraged is he, and fiercer than the son of Bedrawc.§ Fell is the hand of the knight: in flames he involves the retreating foe.

Terrible is the shout of the city,‖ to the timid train, who were scattered before the army of Gododin. From the inclosure of fire, precipitately they fled. In the day of their wrath, they became nimble. They shrunk from their purpose*. Did they merit their horns of mead—the slaves of the mountain chief![†]

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* Mr. Bryant has *demonstrated,* that *Saturn* and *Rhea, Osiris* and Isis, &c. implied the patriarch Noah, and the *Genius* of the *Ark:* with these, I have identified the *Dwyvan* and *Dwyvach; Hu* and *Kêd; Tegid* and *Ceridwen,* &c. of the Britons.

Nöe is here introduced by his proper name; but I do not infer from hence, that this name had been preserved by the Pagan Britons. The sacred writings were known in the days of Aneurin: and that Bard, or some one before him, had sufficient discernment to perceive, that his *Hu, Tegid,* or *Dwyvan,* was originally the same person as the *Nöe* of Scripture history.

Eseye was certainly the same character as *Isis:* and *Teithan* must be identified with the Greek *Titan,* or the *Sun,* who is called *Titin,* in the Hiberno-Celtic. The Bard, as usual, connects his Arkite superstition with Sabian idolatry.

† A name of the same deified person, but transferred to his priest, Eidiol, as it is evident from the action ascribed to him.

‡ The sovereign—*Vortigern,* who is elsewhere styled *Mynawc Mäon,* sovereign of the natives.

§ Bedwyr, the son of Bedrawc, a fabulous hero.

‖ The community of Bards, who probably resided in *booths,* within the outward *vallum* of the temple.

No hall was made so immoveable as this. As for Cynon[‡] of the gentle breast, the governor of the feast, he sat not inactive upon his throne. Those whom he pierced were not pierced again. Keen was the point of his lance. Through the painted corslet did the warrior penetrate. Before his resentment, fleet were the hostile steeds. In the day of wrath, the indignant stroke was returned by the blade of Cynon, when he rushed forth with the early dawn.

Heavy was the stroke which had fallen in the first assault;[§] but he[‖] who administered the liquor, put an end to their outrage. Effectual was his valour, in behalf of *Elphin*.[¶] His spear pushes the chiefs, who had made war in their merriment.—The pinnacle of renown is the radiant bull of battle![**]

Heavy was the stroke which had fallen in the first assault, as a reward for the mead and wine, which were given

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[*] That is, their design of plundering the temple, which appears, upon this occasion, to have been richly furnished and decorated.

[†] The Saxons, who had been the mercenaries and the body guard of *Vortigern*, lord of the mountainous *Venedotia*. Golyddan calls them Cychmyn Gwrtheyrn Gwynedd, the boatmen of Vortigern of Gwynedd.

[‡] "The Prince"—his office and his action prove that the title must here be referred to *Eidiol*.

[§] The sudden attack of Hengist's assassins.

[‖] Eidiol, the governor of the feast.

[¶] The mystical son of Gwyddnaw—the Solar Divinity.—See Section 3.

[**] Throughout the Gododin, this singular title implies Eidiol, or Ambrosius, as the priest and representative of *Hu*, *Nöe*, or Beli, of whom the bull was the favourite symbol.

in the court; but boldly did HIS weapon interpose between the two ranks. The pinnacle of renown is the radiant bull of battle.

Those who made the heavy stroke for the fair treasures, had their host turned aside with trailing shields—those shields, which were shivered before the herds of the roaring BELI.*

From the bloody field, the monster hastens within the fence.† To us, a grey-headed man arrives—his chief counsellor—with the picture of the prancing steed, bearing a sacred message from the chief with the golden chain—the boar, who had made a compact in the front of the course—the great plotter.

How just was the shout of refusal, which burst forth!

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* This paragraph alludes to the battle of *Maes Beli*, near *Caer Conan*, in Yorkshire, where Ambrosius (Eidiol) routed Hengist and his Saxons, in the year 481, and put them to a disorderly flight.—See Gibson's Camden, Col. 847—Warrington, p. 63.

As the Bard denominates the leader a *bull of battle*, so his forces were the *herds of the roaring Beli*. This last name, though conferred upon several princes, was properly a title of the Solar Divinity, whose sanctuary the Saxons had profaned. From this victory obtained by his votaries, the field of battle may have acquired the name of *Maes Beli*, the *field of Beli*.

† That is, within the fortress of Caer Conan, which the Bard describes in a subsequent passage. as situated *upon the high lands of the Done*.

"The Done runs within view of Connisborow, an old castle, called in British, "Caer Conan, and situated upon a rock; whither (at the battle of *Maisbelly*, "when Aurelius Ambrosius routed the Saxons, and put them to a disorderly "flight) Hengist, their general, retired, to secure himself; and a few days "after, took the field against the Britons, who pursued him, and with whom he "engaged a second time, which proved fatal, both to himself and his army. "For the Britons cut off many of them, and taking him prisoner, beheaded "him."—Camden. Ibid.

It appears by this paragraph of Aneurin, that previous to the last desperate engagement, Hengist had sent to the British commander a flag of truce, bearing his own arms; which consisted of *a white prancing horse, upon a red field*.
Verstegan, p. 131.

Again, we are conjured by heaven, that he might be received into protection.

"Let him enjoy the kindness which he displayed in his
"stabbing assault! The warriors, since the time of his famous
"plot, have fought with one design—that his host
"might press the ground!"

SONG XVI.

"AM DRYNNI DRYLAW DRYLEN."—p. 7.

The Death of the Bard at the Feast—the Resentment and Revenge of Eidiol and the Britons.

For the piercing of the skilful and most learned man; for the fair corpse which fell upon the sod; for the cutting of his hair from his head; round the æthereal (temple)[*] of the eagle of Gwydien,[†] Gwyddhwch[‡] turned his protecting spear—the image of the master whom he adored.

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[*] *Awyr*, the *sky*, in this passage, and *Wybr*, which has the same import, in the works of Taliesin, seems to imply a building, which, like Stonehenge, and other British temples, is *open to the sky*. Thus Taliesin—"A holy sanctuary "there is on the wide lake, a city not protected with walls, the sea surrounds "it. Demandest thou, O Britain, to what this can be meetly applied! Before "the lake of the son of Erbin, let thy ox be stationed—there, where there has "been a retinue, and in the second place, a procession, and *an eagle aloft in* "*the sky*, and *the path of Granwyn*" (Apollo). *Append.* No. 2.
So again; he mentions the Druid of *Wybr Geirwnydd*, the *æthereal* (temple) of *Geirwnydd*.—Append. No. 12.

[†] The same as *Gwydion*, the *Hermes* of the Britons.

[‡] The *wild boar*—an epithet applied to Eidiol.

Morien* defended the blessed sanctuary—the basis, and chief place of distribution of the *source of energy,* of the *most powerful,* and the *most ancient.*†—She is transpierced! Though Bradwen‡ (the treacherous dame) was a damsel, she fell—the just expiation for Gwenabwy (the fair corpse) the son of Gwen (the lady).

For the piercing of the skilful, most learned man, the minister§ bore a shield in the action. With energy, his sword descends on the pate. In Loegria, his stern ones cut their way before the prince. He who handles the wolf's neck, without a cudgel in his hand, will have a rent in his garment.

In the conflict of wrath and resentment, the treacherous lady perished—she did not escape.

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* A title of the god, and hence of his priest—as before.

† I must leave it to the antiquaries, to ascertain these divinities, by their attributes.

‡ Rowena, who poisoned Vortimer, her step-son—thence called, *the fair corpse, the son of the lady.*

§ Eidiol, who, though he seems to have been a much better Druid than Christian, held the rank of bishop, in the apostate church of the Britons.

SONG XVII.

"EUR AR VUR CAER."—p. 7.

This Part of the Gododin is badly preserved. The various Readings exceed the Number of Lines; yet they are insufficient to make out the Measure or the Construction. The Passage seems, however, to record a Taunt upon the Conduct of our Bard, in an Affair where he was vested with the Command. The following is the best Sense which I can pick out of the Heap of Fragments.

The gold, without the city walls, was dissipated. The ardent warrior was calling—"Towards the city!" But there, a meek man was stationed, with his shouts, to keep aloof the wandering birds.

Syll of *Vireun* reports, in addition, that from the circumstance of the Llwy (river?) the army was led round the flood, so that, at the hour of dawn, the officers did not act in concert.—

When thou, O toiler of panegyric, wast protecting the ear of corn on the height, (if *ravagers* may be deemed worthy of credit) there was free access to *Din Drei*: there was wealth for him who had courage to fetch it: there was a city for the army that should have resolution to enter.

The Bard replies—

Felicity is not claimed where success has been wanting.

Though there be a hundred men in one house—I know the cares in which I am involved—the chief of the men must defray the charge.

SONG XVIII.

"NYT WYF VYNAWC BLÎN."—p. 7.

The Bard, who is a Prisoner of War, alludes to the preceding Sarcasm, and declares the Circumstances under which his Songs were composed.

I AM not violent nor querimonious: I will not avenge myself on the petulant; nor will I laugh in derision. This particle* shall drop under foot, where my limbs are inflamed, in the subterraneous house, by the iron chain, which passes over my two knees.

Yet, of the mead, and of the horn, and of the assembly of Cattraeth, I, Aneurin, will sing, what is known to Taliesin, who imparts to me his thoughts: and thus, a sonnet of the Gododin is finished, before the dawn of day†.

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* This contemptible scoff.

† From this passage, as well as from the general tenor of the work, it is evident that the Gododin was not undertaken as one single poem, with a regular and connected design.

SONG XIX.

" GOROLED GOGLEDD GWR AE GORUC."—p. 8.

In the last Song, we found Aneurin amusing the tedious Nights of his Imprisonment, with the Composition of his Sonnets. But now he has, for some Time, been set at large by a Son of Llywarch.[*] *A considerable Interval must, therefore, have elapsed, since the Date of the preceding Composition.*

The Bard begins with a Tribute of Gratitude to his Benefactor; and then passes, with some Address, to the Subject of the fatal Feast. He enumerates the Fields where the British Warriors had fought, under Vortimer; but the Paragraph which contains this Catalogue is very imperfect, and the Sense is collected, with some Difficulty, out of a Mass of various Readings. The Song concludes with some Allusions to the Retaliation of the Britons in subsequent Battles.

The chief renown of the North[†] has a hero acquired, of gentle disposition—a liberal Lord, who has not been equalled.

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[*] Generally supposed to have been *Llywarch Hên,* the celebrated Bard. But here a difficulty presents itself. Llywarch is the reputed author of an Elegy upon the death of Cadwallon, the son of Cadvan, which happened about the year 646: and it is obvious, that the son of a man who was living in the year 646, could not have liberated *Aneurin,* who had witnessed the massacre of 472.

I think it probable, that Aneurin's friend was the son of *Llywarch Hên;* but that Llywarch, who is known to have flourished in the beginning of the sixth century, could not have been the author of the Elegy in question.

The piece was anonymous: but some old copyist thinking it worth preserving, transcribed it into a book which contained some of Llywarch's genuine works—hence it has passed under his name.

[†] Our author was a Northumbrian Briton, and so was Llywarch Hên.

Yet earth does not support, nor has mother borne, a warrior so illustrious, when clad in steel. By the force of his bright sword, he protected me; from the horrid, subterraneous prison he brought me forth—from the inclosure of death, from a hostile region. Such is *Ceneu*, the son of Llywarch, energetic and bold.

He would not have brooked the disparagement of a solemn Bardic meeting,* in the character of a Seneschal, with his vessels full of mead. For deeds of violence, he would have supplied swords; he would have furnished weapons for war: but with his arm he would have supported his guests.

But before the band of Gododin and Bernicia,† booths for horses were prepared in the hall: there was streaming gore, and blood-stained armour, and the long knife ‡ to thrust from the hand. And with speed were they distinguished into tribes, whilst the *Lady* and her *paramour* § were stowing their parties, an armed man, and a man unarmed, by turns.‖

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* Alluding to the "Gorsedd," or solemn Bardic assembly, in which Hengist had perpetrated his atrocious deed.

† The Bard being a Northern Briton, mentions his own countrymen with a patriotic distinction, though they had constituted only a *part* of the devoted assembly.

‡ The *sear,* with which Hengist's party were privately armed.

§ Rowena and Vortigern.

‖ The Saxons, wearing their corslets, and armed with the dagger; the Britons totally unarmed.

"By the contrivance of Hengist, they were placed with his train, alter-
"nately, at the tables, under the pretence of confidence, and of a friendly
"intercourse with each other."—*Warrington,* p. 59.

These were not men who would stab and fly. They had been the generous defenders of every region—at *Llech Leuça,* at the stone of *Titleu,* at *Leudvre,* at *Llech Levdir,* at *Gardith,* at *Tithragon,* at *Tegvare,* in front of Gododin, at *Ystre Annon,* at the course of *Gododin,* and at *Ragno.*[*] Close by his hand, was that hand which had directed the splendour of battle, the branch of Caerwys, though he had been shattered by a tempestuous season—a tempestuous season, which had favoured the ships of the alien host.

To form a rank before the royal power, we were allured —it was to our ruin! Deeply did they design—sharply did they pierce the whole of our assembly.

But the chief of the projecting shield[†] has had his van broken, before the bull of battle,[‡] whose enemies tremble in sorrow, since the battle of active tumult at the border of Ban Carw.[§]

Round the border of Ban Carw, the freckled fingers[||] had broken the sprigs, to know who should be overwhelmed, who should conquer—to know who should be routed, who should triumph.

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[*] The scenes of Vortimer's battles, in which these heroes had distinguished themselves. The paragraph is greatly injured by time, and the present catalogue is collected from the various readings, including those which are inserted in the text. W. Archaiol. p. 13.

[†] Hengist.

[‡] Eidiol, or Ambrosius, as before.

[§] Probably, the old name of *Maes Beli*, before it had obtained a new designation, from the victory of the Britons.

[||] Hengist, who is elsewhere called *Dyvynawl Vrych, the freckled intruder,* is here represented as consulting his lots upon the event of the approaching battle.

"The native is roused—the invader is subdued."[*]

In Rhiwdrech,[†] he who is not bold, will fail of his purpose. Victory is not for him who dreads being overtaken.

SONG XX.

"NY MAT WANPWYT."—p. 8.

This little Dialogue may be supposed to have passed between Rowena and a native Briton. It forcibly paints the Feelings of the Times.

ROWENA.

Not meetly was the shield pierced upon the side of the horse[‡]—not meetly did the man of the grey stone pillars mount the lofty steed[§]—dark was his spear.

BRITON.

It was dark: but darker, by far, is thy husband in the cell,[‖] gnawing the jaw of a buck.

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[*] This sentence contains the omen, collected from the lots.

[†] "The cliff of superiority, or prevalence."—This seems to be the name which the Britons gave to the scene of Hengist's last fatal action, near the *rock* of Caer Conan, where he was taken and beheaded.

[‡] The names of Hengist and Horsa equally imply a *horse*. One of these commanders had been slain, and the other beaten; it is, therefore, uncertain which of them is here meant.

[§] Eidiol, the priest of the great temple, who is represented as seated upon his *steed*, when he filled the office of *Seneschal*.

[‖] Vortigern, who was confined by Hengist after the massacre, till he purchased his liberty by the cession of part of his dominions.

ROWENA.

I hope he enjoys it—may he be supplied with a few jaws!

BRITON (indignantly).

How happily did our Adonis come to his Venus!——
"Let the Lady of the sea (says he), let Bradwen only
"come hither, and then (O Hengist!) thou mayest do—
"thou mayest kill; thou mayest burn—worse than Morien
"thou canst not do."*

But thou hast regarded neither moderation nor counsel, thou *beheader*,† with the haughty countenance! Thou, O Venedotian, didst not attend to the great swelling sea of knights, who would give no accommodation to the Saxons.

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* A sarcastic repetition of the language supposed to have been addressed by Vortigern to Hengist, when he sued for the hand of Rowena.

† Vortigern, the Venedotian. "Gwrtheyrn Gwynedd," who had ascended the throne, by causing his cousin Constans to be *beheaded* in his bed; and afterwards, by overruling the voice of the British council, had invited the Saxons into Britain to support his tottering cause, and to oppose the Picts, whose resentment he had provoked, by imputing to the guards of that nation his own sacrilegious crime.

SONG XXI.

" GODODIN GOMYNAF."—p. 8.

The Bard, observing the Calamities of his Country, reflects upon the Circumstance of the fatal Banquet, which had deprived the Britons of their best Supporters.

GODODIN! upon thy account, I deplore the dales beyond the ridge of Drum Essyd. A servant,* greedy of wealth, but void of shame, by the counsel of his son,† sets thy heroes on high. Not mean was the place appointed for conference, before the perpetual fire.‡ From twilight to twilight, the sweet liquor is quaffed by the stranger, who glances at the purple.§ He kills the defenceless, but melodious minister‖ of the bulwark of battle—his inseparable companion—whose voice was like that of Aneurin.

At once¶ arose the warriors of the chief—In Cattraeth—a noisy and impetuous mob—to pay the reward of the mead in the court, and the beverage of wine.——Between the two ranks a spear was extended by a dignified knight,** in defence of Gododin. The pinnacle of renown is the radiant bull of battle.

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* Hengist, who had been a mercenary captain.

† Vortigern, who had married the *daughter* of Hengist, and whom the Bard repeatedly stigmatises as the adviser of the plot.

‡ Or the fire of Meithin. We have frequent allusions to the cell of the sacred fire.

§ Hengist, whose ambition aimed at the sovereignty of Britain.

‖ The Bard, *Owen,* whose fate is so often deplored.

¶ Upon Hengist's signal, the Saxons made a sudden and general assault.

** Eidiol, who is styled the *bull of battle.*

At once arose the warriors of the associated King—strangers to the land—their deed shall be proclaimed. The stranger with the gorgeous robe, rolls down our heroes in the place where the Elain (Bards) were in full harmony.* Amongst the weapons of the freckled chief,† thou couldst not have seen the rod.‡ With the base, the worthy can have no concord. The sea rovers cannot defend their outrageous deed with their steel blades, ready to shed blood.

At once arose the warriors of the associated King—strangers to the land—their deed shall be proclaimed. In close rank, with blades, there was slaughtering; and the man of carnage prevailed over the hero.

The experienced warriors who had assembled, were all assaulted at once with an unanimous stroke. Short were their lives—long is the grief of their friends. Seven times their number of Löegrians had they slain.§——From this conflict arose the screams of their wives, and many a mother has the tear upon her cheek.

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* The precincts of the great Druidical temple.

† Hengist, as before.

‡ The pacific insigne of the Bard—in song 25, it is called *the branch.*

§ In the wars of Vortimer.

SONG XXII.

"NY WNAETHPWYD NEUADD."—p. 9.

The Bard celebrates the Fame of the great Temple, and of Eidiol, who bravely defended it, after the outrageous Assault of the Saxons.

NEVER was a hall formed so complete—nor a lion so generous, in the presence of the lion of the greatest course,* as Cynon of the gentle breast, the most comely Lord.

The fame of the city† extends to the remotest parts—the established inclosure of the band of the harmonious BUDD.‡

And of all that I have seen, or shall see hereafter, unequalled in his conduct, is the brandisher of arms. Most heroic in energy, with the sharpest blade, he slew the ravagers. Like rushes they fell before his hand. O son of Clydnaw,§ of the lasting fame, to thee will I sing a song of praise, without boundary, without end!

If in the banquet of mead and wine, *they*‖ sacrificed to

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* The *sun*.—Eidiol, or Cynon (the prince), the chief priest of the temple, is also styled a *lion*.

† The temple, surrounded by a vallum, which included the dwellings of the Bards.

‡ Victory.—This seems to be a title of *Kéd*, or *Ceridwen*, the British Ceres.

§ "Ship-bearer"—he who carried the sacred ark in the British mysteries.

‖ The Saxons.

slaughter the mother of *spoliation,* the energetic Eidiol[*] also honoured her before the mount, in the presence of the god of victory, the King who rises in light, and ascends the sky.

Whilst the assembled train were accumulating, like a darkening swarm, around him, without the semblance of a retreat, his exerted wisdom planned a defence against the pallid outcasts, with their sharp-pointed weapons.

Before the vigilant son of harmony they fled, upon the awaking of the mother of *Rheiddin*[†] (the Radiant), leader of the din.

SONG XXIII.

"O WINVEITH A MEDDVEITH."—p. 9.

On the calamitous Consequences of the fatal Banquet.

From the drinking of wine and mead, to strife proceeded the mail-clad warriors.[‡] No tale of slaughter have I known, which records so complete a destruction, as that of the assembly, who had confidently met before Cattraeth.

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[*] The *interposing knight,* to whom the Bard so often alludes. This is the first time that his name is introduced; but his character is easily distinguished by the identity of the action ascribed to him.

[†] Apollo, or the sun—by his *mother,* I think the Bard means *Aurora,* the *dawn:* he frequently tells us, that the action took place at the *dawn.*

[‡] The Saxons, who wore their corslets, or coats of mail.

One man alone returned, of the retinue of most deplorable mountain chief.* One alone, out of three hundred, who had hastened to the feast of wine and mead—men renowned in difficulty, prodigal of their lives, who had jovially caroused together in the well-furnished banquet, copiously regaling upon mead and wine.

From the retinue of the mountain chief, ruin has extended to us; and I have lost my chief, and my sincere friends. Of three hundred nobles who hastened to Cattraeth, alas! none have returned, but one man alone.

In the present insurrection, confident was the son of the stranger. Easy was he in his discourse, if he were not jocular—hence the delusive security of Gododin.†

After the wine and mead, he who had been unrestrained, is left motionless upon the course, and the red-stained warrior mounts the steeds of the knight, who had been formidable in the morning.

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* Out of three hundred and sixty-three, we are told that *three* escaped; or, as it is elsewhere expressed, one man out of a hundred: but from this passage it appears, that only *one* of these pertained to three hundred of the first rank, which composed the more immediate retinue of Vortigern, or the mountain chief.

† Hengist had carefully disguised his sentiments, lest he should excite a premature suspicion of his design.

SONG XXIV.

"ANGOR DEOR DAEN."—p. 10.

An Invocation to the Sun, in which the Destruction of the Foe is predicted. The Praise of Eidiol and the British Patriots, who retaliated upon the Saxons. Some Account of the religious Ceremonies at the solemn Meeting.

ANGOR, thou producer of good, thou serpent who piercest the sullen ones, thou wilt trample upon those who are clad in strong mail, in the front of the army.

In behalf of thy supplicant wilt thou arise; thou wilt guard him from the spoiler: thou wilt trample the spearmen in the day of battle, in the dank entrenchment, like the mangling dwarf,* whose fury prepared a banquet for birds in the tumultuous fight.

Just art thou named, from thy righteous deed, thou leader, director, and supporter of the course of battle. O Merin,† son of Madien, happy was thy birth!

It is an imperative duty, to sing the complete acquisition of the warriors who, round Cattraeth, made a tumultuous rout. The authors of the bloody confusion were trampled under feet. Trampled were the stern ones, whose mead had mantled in the horns: and the carnage made by the interposers, after the battle had been roused, cannot be related by the cauldron of Kêd,[*] though it excel in eloquence.

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* Neddig Nar—an abortion, cut out of the womb of his mother.

† Otherwise, son of Seithenin—Saturn, Noah. The Welsh monks have converted him into a saint.

It is an imperative duty, to sing the perfection of renown—the tumult of fire, of thunder and of tempest—the exerted bravery of the knight,[†] who interposed, the red reaper, whose soul pants for war. The strenuous, but worthless man has he decollated in battle. The multitude of the land shall hear of his deed.

With his shield upon his shoulder, has he poured forth an effusion (of blood) as it were wine out of crystal vessels. He who extorted silver for his mead, has paid gold in return,[‡] and *Gwaednerth*,[§] son of the supreme king has had his banquet of wine.

It is an imperative duty to sing the illustrious patriots, who, after the fatal stroke, replenished the stream (of heroism) whose hand satisfied the hunger of the brown eagles, and provided food for the beasts of prey.

Of those who went to Cattraeth, wearers of the gold chains, upon the message of the mountain chief, sovereign of the natives;[*] it is manifest there came not to Gododin, in behalf of the Britons, a hero from a distant region, who was better than Cynon.[†]

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[*] *Kibno Kêd*—the same as Pair Ceridwen—the Cauldron, or sacred Vase of the British Ceres—figuratively, the Bardic lore.

[†] Eidiol, or Ambrosius, who, in the year 481, beheaded Hengist at Caer Conan.

[‡] The meaning is, that the Saxons paid dear for their outrage at the feast.

[§] *Force of blood*—or he who sheds blood by violence, an epithet of the British *Mars*.

It is an imperative duty, to sing the complete associates, the cheerful ones of the Ark *of the world*.[‡] Hu was not without his selection; in the Circle *of the world*, it was his choice to have *Eidiol*, the harmonious: for, notwithstanding their gold, their great steeds, and the mead they drank, only one dignified man returned from thence—the president of the structure of the splendid one, the grandson of Enovant.

It is an imperative duty, to sing the illustrious patriots, who came on the message of the mountain chief, sovereign of the natives, and the daughter of the lofty Eudav,[§] the same who selected the unarmed, and dressed in purple, those who were destined to be slaughtered.

In the festival of May,[||] they celebrated the praise of the holy ones, in the presence of the *purifying fire*, which was

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[*] Vortigern, the supreme king of the Britons.

[†] "The prince"—Eidiol or Ambrosius, who had returned from Armorica.

[‡] The *Arkite* mythology of this passage deserves the attention of the curious. The great temple was the *ark* and the *circle* of the *world*. *Hu*, the patriarch, was the divinity, and *Eidiol*, his chosen priest—*Hu*, at the same time, was *Aeron*, the Arkite—יארון or the *splendid* one—such is the mixture of *Arkite* and *Sabian* superstition.

[§] From *Au*—and *Tav*—the false usurper.—The lady here intended is Rowena, the daughter of Hengist; for we have already seen, that she, in conjunction with her *paramour*, Vortigern, disposed the ranks at the feast.

[||] *Meiwyr*, the *May-men*—The meeting took place, at the solemn festival of the Britons, in the beginning of May.—The fire here mentioned is well known to the Irish, by the name of *Bealteine*. See the word in Shaw's *Galic* and *English Dictionary*.

made to ascend on high. On the Tuesday, they wore their dark garments—on the Wednesday, they purified their fair attire on the Thursday, they truly performed their due rites (devöed)—on the Friday, the victims were conducted round the circle—on the Saturday, their united exertion was displayed without the circular dance (didwrn)—on the Sunday, the men with red blades were conducted round the circle—on the Monday, was seen the deluge of gore, up to the belt.*

After the toil, the man of Gododin, upon his return before the tents of Madawc, reports but one man in a hundred, who came from thence.

SONG XXV.

"MOCHDWYREAWC YM MORE."—p. 10.

This Song contains many Particulars of the fatal Assault; of the Sanctity of the Bardic Temple, and of Eidiol's Address and Heroism, in defending it.

At early morn arose the tumult of the gate, before the course.† There was a breach; but there was a heap, pervaded with fire. Like a boar didst thou protect the mount, where was the treasure of the associated ones—the place was stained with the dark gore of hawks.[*]

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* This passage describes some of the regular ceremonies of the meeting, which, upon the present occasion, unexpectedly closed, with a deplorable massacre.

† The feast was celebrated, and the outrage committed, upon the *Cursus*, at the distance of half a mile from the temple, and to which one of the avenues leads. Upon this avenue, or perhaps, in the very gate, or passage of the vallum, which surrounds the structure, and which was probably fortified with a strong palisade; Eidiol kindled a fire to obstruct the irruption of the Saxons, who intended to plunder the temple.

Suddenly aroused, in a moment, after kindling the avenue,[†] before the boundary, and conducting his associates in firm array—in the front of a hundred, he thrusts forwards —"It was horrid that ye (Saxons)[‡] should make a flood of gore in the same merriment, with which ye regaled with mead. Was it brave in you to kill a defenceless[§] man, with the cruel and sudden stroke of a sword? How outrageous were it for an enemy to slay a man not equally armed! But he (your chief) has descended, with a sudden and promiscuous stroke.—The skilful chief of song was not to be outraged. To kill him, when he carried the branch, was a violation of privilege. It was a primary law, that Owen should ascend the course—that this branch should whisper before the fierce onset, the

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[*] These birds of prey seem to imply the Saxons, though the term is often used, to denote the British princes.

[†] *Aber*, any passage or outlet.

[‡] This speech is put into the mouth of Eidiol, and evidently addressed to the Saxons.

[§] That is, the *Bard*, who, as we find, was named *Owen*. He carried the *sacred branch*, and chaunted the pacific songs of *Llywy*, the British Proserpine. That Owen was invested with the prerogative of a Druid, appears from the striking coincidence of this passage, with the testimony of Diodorus, respecting those ancient priests.—Lib. V. C. 31.

The passage is thus translated by *Dr. Henry*.

"No sacred rite was ever performed without a Druid; by whom, as being the favourites of the gods, and depositaries of their counsels, the people offered all their sacrifices, thanksgivings, and prayers; and were perfectly submissive and obedient to their commands. Nay, so great was the veneration in which they were held, that *when two hostile armies, inflamed with warlike rage, with swords drawn, and spears extended, were on the point of engaging in battle; at their intervention, they sheathed their swords, and became calm and peaceful.*"—*Hist. of Great Britain*, B. I. Chap. 2.

" effectual songs, which claimed obedient attention—the
" songs of *Llywy,*[*] the assuager of tumult and battle.
" Then would the sword retire to the left side; the warrior,
" with his hand, would support the empty corslet, and the
" sovereign, from his treasure chest, would search out the
" precious reward."

The placid *Eidiol* felt the heat of the splendid Grannawr,[†] (Apollo) when the maid (Llywy) was treated with outrage—even she who was supreme in judgment, possessing the steeds with bright trappings, and the transparent shield.

His (Eidiol's) associates join the fray, determined to stand or fall, whilst he, their wasteful leader, conducts the war; even he who loves the native race—the mighty reaper, whose energy stains the green sod with gore.

They sound for steeds—for trappings they sound; whilst over his temples, he binds the defensive band, and the image of death, scatters desolation in the conflict. In the first onset, the lances are couched to the side, and for a light in the course, shrubs blaze upon the spears. Thus fought the musical tribe,[‡] for the injury of thy cell, *O Kêd,* and of the conclave where he resided, who merited the delicious, potent mead.

With the dawn, the ardent hero makes the slaughter clash, O fair Kêd,* thou ruler of the Löegrian tribes; and in his resentment, he punishes the vexatious hirelings†— His renown shall be heard!

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[*] The British Proserpine, who was symbolized by the *Ovum Anguinum*, and to whom the mystic *branch* was sacred.

[†] Grannawr Gwyn—Taliesin calls him *Gran wyn.*

[‡] The half pagan Bards, who, in that age, constituted the clergy of the Britons.

SONG XXVI.

"GWAN ANHON BYD VEDD."—p. 11.

The Alliteration connects this with the preceding, and the Action is ascribed to the same Person; but these Lines evidently refer to the Vengeance which Eidiol, or Ambrosius, wreaked upon Vortigern; of which we have some further Account in Song 30.

He assaults the infamous contriver of ruin, at the mead banquet—the same who grasped the violent spear of Gwynedd—the bull of the host, who had transgressed the laws of princely battle: though he had kindled the land before his fall, the superior band of Gododin provided his grave.

Involved in vapours,‡ is he that was accustomed to armies. The sovereign, but bitter-handed commander of the forces, was endowed with talents, but vehement and arrogant. In the feast, he was not harsh to his associates, who might remove, and possess his valuable treasures; but in no respect was he a benefactor to his country.

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* The British Ceres, the same as Ceridwen, the mother of Llywy, or Creirwy.

† Or slaves of the *Venedotian*—a phrase by which the Bard reproaches the Saxons.

‡ Vortigern's castle, in North Wales, was burnt to the ground by Ambrosius, and the unfortunate king perished in the flames.—Warrington, p. 62.

SONG XXVII.

"AN GELWIR!"—p. 11.

The Wars of the Britons and Saxons after the Massacre. The Bravery of Eidiol or Ambrosius, with some Particulars of his Conduct at the Moment of the fatal Catastrophe.

We are called! The sea and the borders are in conflict. Spears are mutually rushing—spears of those whom we cherished. There is need of sharp weapons. Gashing is the sword. The *Seaxes,* in wild uproar, are descending on the pate. Before the hostile band, flaming in steel, there is a prosperous leader, even he who supported the steeds and the bloody harness,* on the red-stained Cattraeth. The foremost shaft in the host is held by the consumer of towns, the mighty dog of slaughter, at the supreme mount.†

We are called! To the bright glory of conflict, led on by the hand of the meritorious, the iron-clad chief, the sovereign, who is the theme of the Gododin*—the sovereign, who deplores our divisions.

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* Alluding probably to the arms of Hengist, namely, a prancing steed, upon a red field, which was displayed at the fatal banquet.

† The great temple, or British *Mount of Judicature,* when the nobles were slain by Hengist.

Before *Eidiol*,† the energetic, there is a flame; it will not be blown aside. Men of approved worth has he stationed in command. The firm covering guard has he placed in the van.

He it was, who vigorously descended upon the scattered foe. When the cry arose, he supported the main weight. Of the retinue of the mountain chief, none escaped but those *defenceless* ones, whom his arm protected.

By the management of the sea rovers, there was not a shield amongst them.‡ They insisted upon a clear space to light the area. He§ who carried the blue gleaming blade, put back his hand, whilst our chief priest‖ was leaning upon a priest's long staff, seated upon a grey steed, as governor of the feast. Beneath the blade,¶ there was a dreadful fall of slaughter. Nor from the conflict did he** fly—

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[*] Eidiol or Ambrosius—the undoubted *hero* of the Gododin.

[†] The original has Eidyn, the *living one;* but the two next paragraphs clearly evince, that Eidiol is the person intended.

[‡] Though shields were not offensive arms, yet their admission into the assembly, might have defeated the murderous purpose of Hengist: a reason was therefore devised, why they should be excluded. It was pretended that their wide orbs would obstruct the light of the torches, during the nightly carousal. —The Saxon corslets were not liable to the same objection.

[§] Hengist.

[‖] Eidiol—The Britons and the Germans had great respect for their horses; but the introducing of the *governor of the feast upon his steed,* was a whimsical rite, whether considered as religious or military.

[¶] *Of Hengist and his Saxons.*

[**] Eidiol, as above.

the spearman, mounted upon the steed—he who did the honours of the banquet of delicious, potent mead.

I beheld a spectacle* from the high land of the Done, when they were descending with the sacrifice round the omen fire. I saw what was usual, in a town closely shut up; and disorderly men were pierced with agony.—I saw men in complete order, approaching with a shout, and carrying the head of the *freckled intruder*.†—May the ravens devour it!

SONG XXVIII.

"MAT MUDIG."—p. 12.

Sequel of the Acts of Ambrosius, after the Fall of Hengist, with a Hint respecting the Manner of his Death.

THE light and bleached bones of the aliens are removed by the fortunate chief: his blue banners are displayed: whilst the foe ranges the sea, *Gwrawl* (Aurelius) is in the watery region, with a mighty host. The magnanimous triumphs: disarmed is the feeble. It was his primary order, to make a descent, before the ships of the royal force, with propulsive strokes, in the face of blood, and of the land.

I will love thy victorious throne, which teemed with strains of harmony, thou president of the structure of the splendid one, with the luminous speech. I could wish to have fallen the first in Cattraeth, as the price of the mead and wine in the court—I could wish it for him who never disgraced the sword, rather than that he should be slain with the pale potion.*—I could wish it for the son of fame, who sustained the bloody fight, and made his sword descend upon the violent. Can a tale of valour be recorded before Gododin, in which the son of Ceidiaw† has not his fame, as a warlike hero!

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* The death and decollation of Hengist at Caer Conan, upon the bank of the *Done*.—Gibson's Camden, Col. 847.

† *Dyvynawl Vrych*—Hengist, as above.

SONG XXIX.

"TRUAN YW GENNYF."—p. 12.

The Bard takes a general Retrospect of the Affairs of Britain, from the Time of Vortimer, to the Beginning of the Sixth Century.

With sorrow I reflect, that after our toils, we suffer the pang of death through indiscretion. And again, with pain and sorrow I observe, that our men are falling, from the highest to the lowest, breathing the lengthened sigh, and loaded with obloquy. (We are going) after those men who extended the fame of our land—*Rhuvawn* and *Gwgawn, Gwyn* and *Gwylged,* men most valiant, most magnanimous and firm in the hour of trial. May their souls obtain—now their toils have ceased—a reception in the heavenly region—a secure dwelling!

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* Ambrosius was poisoned by Eppa, a Saxon, acting in the character of a physician.—Warrington, p. 66.

† The Preserver—the mystical parent of our hero, as an adept in the mysteries of Bardism.

He who, through a lake of gore, repelled the slavish chain*—he who, like a hero, cut down those foes, who would not retreat to the clear expanse; even he, together with the spear, brought forth the crystal cup—with mead, placed before the princes, he encouraged the army. The greatness of his counsels a multitude cannot express. The coward was not suffered to hesitate. Before the velocity of his great designs, together with the sharpened blades, he took care to provide flags of message, the means of supporting his army, a supply of penetrating weapons, and a strong van-guard, with a menacing front.

In the day of strenuous exertion, in the gallant conflict, these displayed their valour; but after the intoxication, in the banquet of mead, there has been no complete deliverance.†

Our president at the festival‡ was prosperous for a season: for it will be recorded, that their impulse was broken, by men and steeds. But fixed was the decree of fate, when *they* arrived—that vexatious multitude—with sorrow, I recount their bands—*eleven complete battalions.*—Now there is precipitate flight, and lamentation upon the road.

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* Vortimer, who, after a series of bloody battles, drove the Saxons out of Britain.

† The Saxons never evacuated the island, after the massacre of the British nobility.

‡ Eidiol or Ambrosius.

Dolefully do I deplore, what I greatly loved—the Celtic glory! And the men of Argoed,* how wofully did they associate, to their own overwhelming, with the wretch, who utterly ruined the prosperity of the country, for the benefit of his chiefs, when upon *timbers of rude workmanship*, at the deluge of affliction, they caroused together at the feast.† He it was who had robbed us upon the fair Thanet,‡ and with the white and *fresh hide*.§

Thou, O Geraint,‖ didst raise a shout before the South: on the shield didst thou strike a signal, to repair to the white water.

Thou chief of the spear, thou, O gentle chief, didst render our youth attached to the glory of the sea—even thou didst render them, O Geraint, a generous commander wast thou!

Instantaneously his fame reaches the harbours. At once, the anchors are weighed. Like liberated eagles were his alert warriors—men, who with brilliant zeal would support the battle, and scud with a velocity, outstripping the fleetest coursers. If the battle paused, the wine flowed from the capacious vessel. Before he reached the grassy tomb, or his locks became hoary with age, he was a hero, who honoured the mead banquet with the generous bowl.

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* The Northern Britons, who made a league with Hengist.

† The feast, in which Hengist slew the nobles.

‡ *Danad loyw*—Vortigern, upon Hengist's first arrival, allotted the Isle of Thanet for the place of his residence.—*Warrington, with his authorities*, p. 44.

§ Hengist desired of Vortigern, a grant of as much British ground as he could compass about, with a bull's hide. Having obtained this moderate request, he cut a large bull's hide into small thongs, with which he compassed a considerable tract, where he founded a castle, called from that circumstance, *Thong Castle.*—Camden (Col. 569) places it in Lincolnshire; but Verstegan, p. 133, says it stood near *Sydingborn* in Kent.

‖ Geraint, son of Erbin, a prince of the Britons of Devon, and the commander of a British fleet, in the close of the fifth, and beginning of the sixth century.

SONG XXX.

" DIHENYDD I BOB LLAWR LLANWET."—p. 13 & 14.

An Elegy upon the Death of Vortigern—the Original is obscure, and badly preserved.

He who brought the influx of ruin upon every region—like a man indifferent to all events—strikes the signal upon his shield. At length, the strenuous man obtained a retreat in Rhyvoniawg,* like the nest of those who are buried, and set apart from society. With his warlike steeds and gory arms, he deems it fortunate to remain unmolested.

But he who had afflicted great and courageous men, and with his sword, had severely slaughtered in the fight, receives a woful warning of conflict, from him who had prepared a hundred songs for the festival.†

By the two sons of Urvei was he assaulted; he was assaulted by those two exulting boars, who were of the same parentage as a sovereign prince, and a holy maid. And though the lord of Gwynedd was a dignified sovereign, and the blood (relation) of Cilydd, our deliverer;* yet before the turf was laid upon the face of the magnanimous, but falling prince, he was wisely assailed with battle, and divested of fame and privilege.

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* In North Wales, whither Vortigern withdrew, after the massacre, *covered with confusion and reproach.*—Warrington, p. 60.

† Geoffry of Monmouth says he had this warning delivered by the Bard, *Merddin Emrys.*

The grave of the lofty *Gorthyn* is seen from the highlands of Rhyvoniawg.†

SONG XXXI.

"PEIS DINOGAT."

A sarcastic Elegy upon the Death of Hengist, addressed to his son Octa, when he was taken at York, whither he had fled from the Battle of Caer Conan, in the Year 481.‡

The garment of Tinogad § is variegated with grey stripes—a fabric of the skins of wild beasts—I will ridicule that lampooner, the captive Octa,* with his juggling *whit whant.*†

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* Perhaps Ambrosius, who was a relation of Vortigern.

† The wilds of Carnarvonshire.

‡ Compare Gibson's Camden Col, 847, with Warrington, p. 64.

§ " Br—ch out of battle,"—an epithet of reproach, addressed to *Octa*, who had deserted his father in extremity, and fled into York.

When thy father went out hunting, with his lance upon his shoulder, and his provisions in his hand, he would call his dogs so majestically—"Gif, gaf; thaly, thaly; thuc, "thuc."‡ Then would he kill a fish in a brook, as a lion kills a calf.

When thy father ascended the mountain, he brought back the head of a *roebuck,* of a *wild boar,* of a *stag,* of a grey *moor hen* from the hill, or of a *fish* from the falls of the Derwent.§

As many as thy father could reach with his flesh-piercer, of wild boars, that had been just dropped and licked—it was certain death to them all, unless they proved too nimble.

Were he to come upon me, and unawares, no foe that I have met, or that I shall encounter, would be more formidable. The man has not been nursed, who could be more *penetrating* in the hall,‖ or more *wary* in battle.

On the ford of Penclwyd Pennant were his steeds: at a distance would he seek his fame, closely girt in his armour; but before the long-haired chief was covered with the sod, he, the son of the sea-horse, poured out the horns of mead.*

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* The author calls him *Wyth,* which means *Octo;* and in this burlesque passage, it also implies *Octa.*

† A mimicry of some Saxon words: the meaning is, possibly, *white wand.*

‡ More of Aneurin's Saxon, which I shall not attempt to translate.

§ A curious anti-climax.

‖ Alluding to his massacre at the feast.

I saw the scene from the high land of the Done,† when they were carrying the sacrifice round the omen fire—I saw two,‡ who fell away from their station—even two of the disorderly men, who were greatly thwarted—I saw warriors, who had made the great breach, approaching with a shout, and with the head of the freckled intruder—may the ravens devour it!

The remainder of the printed copy consists only of various readings, of certain passages, which had been collected by some ancient transcriber.

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* Another sarcasm upon his outrage at the feast.

† The death of Hengist, as related above.

‡ A sarcasm upon *Octa* and *Esca*, who retired from the field, and shut themselves up in the city of York, where they were forced to surrender.

I have now, with considerable labour, and, to the best of my abilities, with accuracy and fidelity, translated and explained the Gododin of Aneurin, that the reader, having the whole work under his eye, may draw his own conclusion from it: and this, if I mistake not, must amount to a conviction, that the great catastrophe which the Bard deplores, was no other than that historical event, the massacre of the British nobles by the Saxon king, in the neighbourhood of Stonehenge; and consequently, that the magnificent temple, or sanctuary, so often introduced, was that identical structure.

From hence it must follow, that this pile could not have been erected, as fable has sometimes reported, in commemoration of the massacre; but that, on the contrary, it was a monument of venerable antiquity in the days of Hengist; and that its peculiar sanctity influenced the selection of that spot for the place of conference between the British and Saxon princes. It is equally clear, that the sacred building did not receive its name, *Gwaith Emrys*, from *Emrys*, or *Ambrosius*, a prince who fought with Hengist:*

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* Yet I think it probable, that the real founder of this temple may have had the name of *Emrys*, which was a title of the Helio-arkite god, and hence conferred upon his priest, under whose direction the building was completed.

Aneurin seems to ascribe its construction to *Morien, Janus Marinus*, which was also a name of the same god, and of his priest.

The mythological Triads describe *Morien* the *Full-bearded* as a foreigner, who was vested with the sovereignty of Britain.—W. Archaiol, V. II. p. 64.

It is the general tradition of the Britons, that the *Helio-arkite* superstition was of foreign growth, and that it came to them by the way of Cornwall, and therefore probably from the tin merchants. *See the 5th section*. And it may be reasonably inferred, that the building of those temples, which are constructed upon *astronomical* principles, was not prior to the introduction of that superstition, whatever may have been its date.

but that, on the other hand, it communicated to him its own name, as he was the president and defender of the *Ambrosial* stones.

That this ancient structure was sacred to the Druidical superstition, is fully evident, from the language in which it was described, and the great veneration in which it was held by the primitive Bards, those immediate descendants, and avowed disciples of the British Druids.

As the "Great sanctuary of the dominion," or metropolitan temple of our heathen ancestors, so complex in its plan, and constructed upon such a multitude of astronomical calculations, we find it was not exclusively dedicated to the *sun*, the *moon*, *Saturn*, or any other individual object of superstition; but it was a kind of *pantheon*, in which all the Arkite and Sabian divinities, of British theology, were supposed to have been present: for here we perceive *Noe* and *Hu*, the deified *patriarch; Elphin* and *Rheiddin*, the *sun; Eseye, Isis; Kêd, Ceres*, with the cell of her sacred fire; *Llywy, Proserpine; Gwydien, Hermes; Budd, victory*, and several others.

We learn from the Gododin, that the conference with Hengist, and the fatal banquet, took place upon the *Ystre*, or Cursus, which is still discernible, at the distance of half a mile North from the temple. Here, we are told, some temporary buildings of *rudely hewn timber* were erected, for the accommodation of the assembly.

It is easy to account for the choice of this spot, in an age of that gross superstition, which overspread our country in the fifth century. The Celtæ of Gaul and Britain, during their pagan state, were, for the most part, governed by their priests, whose custom it was to assemble, at a certain season, to deliberate upon the greatest civil questions, *in loco consecrato,* or within the verge of their sanctuaries. And as this particular sanctuary of Stonehenge had been esteemed pre-eminently sacred before the coming of the Romans, and whilst the Britons were an independent nation, so, at the departure of those foreigners, it had recoverered its ancient reputation amongst a people, who were still pertinaciously attached to their national usages and superstitions. And *May* was the season appointed for the meeting, because it was the solemn anniversary of the British mysteries.

To most readers it must appear singular, that in an age when Britain was *nominally* christian, the Bards should speak with veneration of a heathen temple, in which heathen rites were still celebrated: the fact, however, is recorded against them in their own *compositions.* It may, indeed, be urged as an excuse for our present author, that he describes the *ancient,* rather than the *actual* solemnities of the place; and that during the great Bardic festival, some ancient rites may have been admitted, which were not, at that time, in general establishment: but I do not mean to be his apologist. Whatever Aneurin might have called himself, it is evident, from the warmth of his language, when speaking of those mystical characters, *Hu, Kêd, Llywy,* and the rest, that they were objects of veneration to him; and so, I am persuaded, they were to the body of the British nation, whose profession of Christianity was certainly very imperfect.

The Bards were generally their priests; and these, as it appears from their own works, were determined bigots to the ancient superstition. Many of the populace of this age were also disciples of *Pelagius,* whose great aim it was to blend the heterogeneous tissue of Druidism with a few shreds of Christianity. Could a people, who had profited so little by the light of the gospel, complain of the act of Providence, in depriving them of their dominion and their country?

The evidence which has been brought forward in this section, will, perhaps, prove to the satisfaction of the candid antiquary, that the larger British monuments, consisting of rude stone pillars, disposed into circles, whether of *twelve, nineteen, thirty,* or more stones, were temples, sacred to some divinity, or to all the divinities of the heathen Britons. I shall now proceed to make a few observations upon some other monuments of the same superstition.

In the account of the temple of the *Gyvylchi,* we are told, that "Not far from it there are three other large "stones, pitched on end, in a triangular form." Such appendages, either within or near to the sacred circles, often occur; and they have been generally regarded as constituting the *cell* or *Adytum* of their respective temples. Thus, at Abury, in the Northermost circle, is a *cell* or *Kebla,* formed of three stones, placed with an obtuse angle towards each opening to the North-east, before which lay the altar, as at Stonehenge.*

That the *cell* of *Ceres*, or "*The stone cell of the honorary fire*," did exist at Stonehenge, is a circumstance ascertained by Aneurin's Gododin; and it is highly probable, that the same was recognised in other temples, where Ceres presided, either alone, or in conjunction with other divinities: yet I have considerable doubts, whether the monuments of this kind, which I have seen, or of which I have read the description, did constitute the cells in question. I rather suspect, that these stones were either the very *images* of the gods, to whom the temples were dedicated, or that they were esteemed peculiarly sacred to them, and viewed as emblems of their presence. Thus the three large stones before the temple of the *Gyvylchi*, may have represented the three great objects of superstition, *Hu*, *Kêd*, or *Ceridwen*, and *Llywy* or *Creirwy*, or *Bacchus*, *Ceres*, and *Proserpine*, whose history and rites were closely connected in British mythology.

No images pertaining to our pagan progenitors, carved either into the human shape, or that of any animal, have been discovered and ascertained, unless the figures pourtrayed upon the British coins should be thought to deserve the name of images: hence it is probable, that such things were, at least, very rare amongst them.

As the Britons had preserved the usage of the earliest ages, in the form and rude materials of their open temples, why may they not have observed the same rule with regard to images? And we have good authority to assert, that—"In ancient times, they had no images in their temples; "but in lieu of them, they used conical stones, called "Βαιτυλια, under which representation their deity was often "worshipped."*

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* Maurice's Ind. Antiq. Vol. VI p. 138.

Mr. Bryant also remarks, that *Ab-adir* was a ϛυλος, or stone pillar, representing *Ops*, the wife of Saturn. One of these stones, according to Pausanias, stood at Delphi: it was deemed very sacred, and used to have libations of wine poured upon it daily; and upon festivals, it was otherwise honoured.†

Again we are told, that "Near the temple of Eleusinian "Damater, in Arcadia, were two vast stones, called *Petroma*, one of which was erect, and the other was laid "over, and inserted into the former. There was a hollow "place in the upper stone, with a lid to it. In this, among "other things, was kept a kind of mask, which was thought "to represent the countenance of Damater, to whom these "stones were sacred."‡

These passages are adduced, in order to shew, that neither the *form* nor the *situation* of those rude isolated stones, which are attached to our British temples, is irreconcileable with the primitive memorials of those very divinities, which our ancestors venerated.

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* Bryant's Analysis, V. I. p. 49.

† Ibid. p. 476.

‡ Ibid. V. II. p. 203.

Leaving this hint to the consideration of the antiquary, I go on to inquire for another kind of apparatus, which was deemed essential to the due celebration of the heathen mysteries.

In the tale of Taliesin's initiation, of which I have treated at large in the preceding section, and in some of that Bard's poems upon the same subject, we are told that Ceridwen, transforming herself into a bird, swallowed the noviciate, who had taken the form of a grain of pure wheat; that she continued for some time pregnant of him, and that, at the expiration of that period, he was *born again.*

This is a dark allegory; but we shall find others upon the same opic, of easier solution.

In another passage which I have quoted, the Bard represents himself as a *grain* of the *Arkites,* which had vegetated upon the mount, and produced an ear of corn; in this state, the *reaper* placed in a *close, smoky recess,* in order to ripen.

In a third passage, the Bard plainly tells us, that he had endured a close confinement in the *hall* of Ceridwen, where he was subjected to *penance,* and *modelled into the form af a perfect man.* This is also the representation which Hywel, the son of Owen, gives of the affair.

Now it may be fairly presumed, that this confinement in the *womb* of Ceridwen, in the *hall* of that goddess, and in the *smoky recess,* implies one and the same thing: and those representations clearly allude to the inclosure of the noviciate, either for mortification, and trial of his fortitude, or for appropriate instruction in some private *cell,* which was sacred to Ceres, which bore her name, and was, therefore, deemed to constitute her mystical person, of whom the aspirant was to be *born again.*

Something of this kind, I presume, was also implied by the Παστος, or *bed,* in which it was requisite that the Greek aspirant should be covered, before he could be admitted to the greater mysteries.

I have some reason to think, that the British cells appropriated to this use, are to be recognized amongst those monuments, which are known by the general name of *Cromlech.* These consist of a certain number of stones, pitched in the ground, so as to form a *cell,* which is covered over with a flat stone of enormous dimensions. We have seen, that there are several of these Cromlechs near the circle of the Gyvylchi, in Snowdon; and they are generally found either in the neighbourhood, or in the very centre of similar monuments.

The date of these erections being very remote, and their use entirely forgotten, it is not improbable, that being misled by certain resemblances, which present themselves to superficial observation, we confound two or three kinds of monuments which are really distinct, and which were erected for different purposes; and that in consequence of this mistake, when we have discovered the use of one Cromlech, we make erroneous conclusions respecting others.

I shall mention two or three opinions, which have been thus generally applied.

In the Cromlech, some antiquaries see nothing but the *bloody altars* of the Druids, smoking with human victims.

To this opinion, it has been replied, that many of them seem, by their gibbous form, and slanting position, to be very ill-contrived for the purpose of altars, and that they bear no marks of the action of fire, upon the upper side.

Others pronounce them altogether *sepulchral,* and support their opinion, with the evidence of *bones* and *urns,* which have been found under some *few* of them; but it may be objected, that several Cromlechs which have been examined, shew no vestige of sepulture, and others seem to have been badly calculated for the purpose, as standing upon *unbroken* rocks.

If it be urged, that because some of them are found to be sepulchres, they must all be regarded as of the sepulchral *form;* this argument will only add support to my hypothesis. Initiation represented *death,* and a *renovation* from the dead. In the British mysteries, the noviciate passed the river of *death,* in the boat of *Garan hir,* the *Charon* of antiquity: and before he could be admitted to this privilege, it was requisite that he should have been *mystically buried,* as well as *mystically dead.* And thus much seems to be implied in the ancient Greek formulary—Ὑϖο τον ϖαϛον ὑϖεδυον—"I covered myself, or was covered in the *bed.*"

Cromlech, according to Mr. Owen, whose opinion, upon this subject, deserves attention, is nothing more than the vulgar name for the *Crair Gorsedd, Maen Llog,* or *Maen Gorsedd;* the *stone* of *covenant,* or *altar of the Bards;* which was placed within the *Cylch Cyngrair,* or *circle* of *federation:* and on which were performed various ceremonies belonging to Bardism.*

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* See W. Eng. Dict. V. *Cromlech.*

Crair Gorsedd, literally implies the *token or pledge of the supreme seat;* and *Maen Llog,* the *stone of the ark or chest.* It is therefore, the same as Aneurin's *Llogell Byd, ark of the world,* in which the priest of *Hu* had been inclosed. The application of these terms to the Cromlech, goes a great way towards establishing my opinion: for as a due initiation into the sacred mysteries, was the last requisite towards completing the *covenant* or *federation* of the Bards; so this *stone of the ark* was employed in the celebration of those mysteries.

That some of the monuments, called Cromlechs, were actually resorted to in celebrating the rites of Ceres, and that the stone *arks,* or *chests* which they covered, constituted the *womb* or *hall* of the goddess, in which the aspirants were inclosed, will appear from the following observations.

Ceridwen, or Ceres, was the genius of the ark; and that ark had its representative in the temple, or sanctuary of the goddess. Hence the mythological triads record the feat of *Gwgawn Lawgadarn, the severe one, with the mighty hand,* who rolled the stone of *Maen-Arch,* the *stone ark,* from the valley to the top of the hill, though it was so large, that not less than sixty oxen could have moved it.

This *Gwgawn* was a mere personification of the Druidical Hierarchy, or of the ministers which they employed: and the *stone,* of the *stone ark,* is not to be understood as implying one individual slab, but as a general appurtinent to a kind of monument known by that name; and as a memorial of its prototype, the ark of Noah.

If we look upon the tops of our hills for monumental stones, which answer this description, we shall find them only in the enormous Cromlech, the covering stone of the *Kist-vaen, stone chest,* or *ark*—a name precisely synonymous with *Maen-Arch.*

That all these monuments could not have been *mere altars,* or *mere sepulchres,* is evident from their very form. For instance, the monument in Gower, called *Arthur's stone,* is thus described.

" They (the stones) are to be seen upon a jutting, at " the North-west of *Kevn Bryn,* the most noted hill in " Gower.—Their fashion and positure is this. There is " a vast unwrought stone, probably about twenty tuns " weight, supported by six or seven others that are " not above four feet high; and these are set *in a circle,* " some on end, and some edgewise, or sidelong, to bear " the great one up. The great one is much diminished of " what it has been in bulk, as having five tuns, or more, " by report, broke off it, to make mill-stones: so that I " guess, the stone originally to have been, between twenty-" five and thirty tuns in weight.—The common people call " it *Arthur's stone*—under it *is a well,* which, as the neigh-" bours tell me, has a flux and reflux with the sea."*

Here we find the Cromlech, as the cover of a mystic *cell* or *stone ark,* furnished with its sacred fountain. The ascribing of this, and similar monuments, to Arthur, is not, as our author supposes, a *vulgar conceit,* respecting the hero of that name, who lived in the sixth century. I have distinguished an Arthur, celebrated in the mythological triads, and in the works of the Bards; as the representative of the patriarch, who was inclosed in the *ark;* to the traditional history of which, the fountain under this *Maenarch,* or *stone-ark,* seems to have had an allusion: for we are told that the inclosure of *Sidi,* or seat of Ceres, contained a *well of water* which was sweeter than wine. I have seen the remains of a similar cell, in Llanvareth, in Radnorshire, inclosing a fair spring, called *Fynawn Einion,* or the well of the *just one:* and I learn from Mr. Maurice, that fountains often occurred in the sacred cells of antiquity, which were appropriated to the celebration of mysteries.

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* Gibson's Camden, Col. 741.

Let us hear the description of another Cromlech, which appears as an appendage to an ancient temple.

" There are in this county (Pembrokeshire) several such " *circular* stone monuments as that described in Carmar- " thenshire, by the name of *Meineu Gwyr;* and *Kevn* " *Llechart,* in Glamorganshire. But the most remarkable " is that which is called *Y Gromlech*—in Nevern* parish, " where are several rude stones pitched on end, in a *circu-* " *lar order;* and *in the midst of the circle,* a vast rude stone, " placed on several pillars. The diameter of the *æra* is " about fifty feet. The stone, supported in the midst of " this circle, is eighteen feet long, and nine in breadth; " and at the one end, it is about three feet thick, but " thinner at the other. There lies also by it, a piece bro- " ken off, about ten feet in length, and five in breadth, " which seems more than *twenty oxen could draw.* It is " supported by three large rude pillars, about eight feet " high; but there are also five others, which are of no

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* Nev-ern, pledge of heaven.

"use at present, as not being high enough, or duly placed, "to bear any weight of the top stone. Under this stone "the ground is neatly flagged, considering the rudeness of "monuments of this kind."*

This Cromlech, covering a rude, but magnificent cell, with a paved floor, and placed in the midst of the sacred circle, has not the appearance of a sepulchral monument.

Many of these monuments, it has been observed, bear the name of Arthur, being styled his *tables*, his *quoits*, and the like.

But in the tale of Taliesin's initiation, the table of Arthur is connected with the mysteries of Ceridwen, and in Llan Beudy† parish, in Carmarthenshire, we find a monument which joins the name of Arthur with another name, which we can only refer to that goddess. It is called *Bærdd Arthur, Arthur's table*, and *Gwâl y Vîlast*, the couch, or Παϛος, of the *Greyhound bitch.*

This is a rude stone, about ten yards in circumference, and above three feet thick, supported by four pillars, which are about two feet and a half high.‡

Not to insist upon the *dogs*, which were always exhibited in the mysteries of Isis and Ceres, and the title of dogs, with which their priests were distinguished, it must be remarked, that in the mythological tale which I have just mentioned, we are told, that Ceridwen transformed herself into a *greyhound bitch*, and in that form, chased the aspirant towards the river.

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* Gibson's Camden, Col. 759.—See also 707, 740, &c.

† Ox-house.

‡ Gibson's Camden, Col. 752.

In this monument, therefore, we have a commemoration of the Diluvian patriarch, under the mythological name of *Arthur;* and of the *genius of the ark*, under her assumed character of a *greyhound bitch.*

And lest it should be thought, that the latter circumstance is purely accidental, it must be observed, that more than one spot preserves the memory of the mystical *bitch.*

There is a monument of the same kind, and distinguished by the same name of *Gwâl y Vilast*, in Glamorganshire, and a third, called *Llech yr Ast*, the *flat stone of the bitch*, in Cardiganshire.*

And it may be suspected, that some of the connections of this mystical lady, had assumed a correspondent form; as we find *Ffynawn Maen Milgi, the spring of the greyhound's stone*, a remarkably large stream, issuing out of the side of Berwyn mountain, in Meirionethshire †

Near *Llech yr Ast*, in Cardiganshire, there are five *Kist Vaens, stone chests*, or *cells*, and a circular area, inclosed with rude pillars, &c.; so that it appears to have been a work of the very same kind, as the temple of *Ceres* and *Proserpine*, in the Gyvylchi.

Ceridwen, the British Ceres, was also represented under the character of *the Giantess*. Taliesin, giving an account of his initiation, styles her—*Hên Widdon Ddulon, the old dark-smiling Giantess.* Under this figure she claims another monument in Cardiganshire, called *Llech y Gowres, the flat stone of the Giantess.*—" Being an exceeding vast stone, " placed on four other very large pillars or supporters, " about the height of five or six feet. Besides which four, " there are two others pitched on end, under the top stone, " but much lower.—There are also three stones, two large " ones, and behind them a lesser, lying on the ground, at " each end of this monument.—This *Llech y Gowres* stands " on such a small bank, or rising, in a plain open field, as " the five stones, near the circular monument, called " Rolrich stones, in Oxfordshire."*

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* Gibson's Camden, Col: 772, 773.

† Camb. Register, V. I. p. 298.

Near this Llech y Gowres are several monuments, which have an evident relation to the same subject; as *Meini Hirion,* retaining the name and the form of Ceridwen's temple in the Gyvylchi; *Meini Kyvrivol* the stones of the *equalized computation,* being *nineteen* in number, the cycle of the sun and moon, or *Liber and Ceres; Hir vaen Gwyddog,* the high stone of the *Mystagogue;* unless it be a corruption of *Gwydion, Hermes,* or *Gwyddon,* the Giantess: this is a pillar, about sixteen feet high, three feet broad, and two thick. Not far from it is a *Maen y Prenvol,* the stone of the *wooden ark,* or *chest;* this must have been the *memorial,* or the *repository* of an *ark of wood:*—and *Gwely Taliesin,* the *bed* or, Παστος of Taliesin, which is also a kind of *stone chest.*

" I take this, and all others of this kind, (continues my

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* Gibson's Camden, Col. 773.

"author) to be old heathen monuments, and am far from "believing that Taliesin was interred there."*

And if we allow the probable conjecture, that they are heathen monuments, there is every reason to pronounce them *Druidical,* and to infer, that they were constructed for that purpose, which general analogy, their peculiar form, and their very names declare.

Had they been erected since the times of the Druids, their names, or the traditions respecting them, would surely have preserved some memorial of the occasion of their construction. Instead of this, we generally find some circumstance, either in their names or situation, which connects them with the *Druidical* establishment.

Thus, the great Anglesea Cromlech is surrounded by *Tre'r Dryw, Druid's town; Tre'r Beirdd, Bard's town; Bôd Owyr, the dwelling of the Ovates,* and the monument called *Cerig y Bryngwyn, stones of the hill of judicature.*†

So again; there is a parish in Denbeighshire, called *Cerig y Drudion, Druid's stones;* and the monuments which entitle it to this name, are two *Kist Vaens,* or *stone chests,* covered with their ponderous slabs, or *Cromlechs;* and these chests, are traditionally reported to have served the purpose of prisons.‡

I must here repeat my hint, that the *Cromlech,* and

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* Gibson's Camden, Col. 773.

† Ibid. Col. 809.

‡ Ibid. Col. 813.

Kistvaen, are constituent parts of the same monument, which is distinguished by one or other of these names, as the incumbent stone, or the inclosed cell, becomes the most considerable object of remark. And though I do not deny, that some monuments of similar form, have served the purpose of sepulchres; yet, I am persuaded, that they were in general, the Maenarchs, or *stone arks* of the Triads, and those in which the British Ceres, and Proserpine, confined and humbled their votaries.

If it be objected, that at present, we seldom find these cells sufficiently close and secure, for the purpose of confinement; it must be recollected, that time and accident have injured them; that in the age of superstition, it is probable they were surrounded with a fence of wood, or some perishing materials, which have long since disappeared; and that the confinement itself, is not supposed to have been absolutely involuntary. It was a trial of fortitude, rather than of force.

Even the traditions which report the larger works of this kind to have been sepulchral, will, if closely examined, favour that idea of their application, which I have suggested. Thus, "We have a tradition, that the largest Cromlech in this "county (Anglesea) is the monument of *Bronwen,* daugh- "ter of King *Llyr,* or Leirus, who, *you know,* is said to "begin his reign, Anno Mundi 3105."*

I shall not take the trouble to examine the æra of this *Anno-Mundi* sovereign, who, as such, was unknown in Wales before the days of Geoffry, of Monmouth, though our modern heralds have made some efforts to verify his history.

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* Gibson's Camden, Col. 810.

The tale was, originally, mythological; and the daughter of Llŷr, the *Cordelia* of *Shakespeare*, was *Creirddylad*, whom *Gwyn ab Nudd*, the British *Pluto*, claims as his mistress.* This lady, therefore, was our *Proserpine*:† and the tradition respecting the great Anglesea Cromlech, amounts to nothing more than this—that it constituted a *cell*, sacred to Proserpine.

I find that the same Bronwen, the daughter of Llŷr, like Creirwy, the daughter of Ceridwen, had a brother, named *Brân*, the raven, who had the disposal of the mystical cauldron.‡

This history, therefore, brings us home to the sanctuary, and to the mystical rites of Ceridwen and her family. The daughter of *Llyr*, the *sea*, the *mistress* of *Pluto*, and the *sister* of the *raven*, was no other than *Creirwy*, the daughter of the British *Ceres*, to whom the same cauldron was peculiarly sacred.

The Cromlech is distinguished in the Triads by another name, synonymous with Maenarch, and referable to the history of Ceridwen, considered as the genius of the ark. The name I mean is *Maen Ketti*.

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* W Archaiol. p. 166.

† See some farther account of her in the next section.

‡ See Mr. Turner's *Vindication*, p. 283.

We are told, that the three mighty labours of the island of Britain were, lifting the stone of KETTI; building the work of EMRYS; and piling up the *mount* of the *assemblies.**

The *work of Emrys* implies the *sacred circles,* such as *Stonehenge,* which is known by that name; the *Main Ambres,* in Cornwall; *Dinas Emrys,* in Snowdon; and other *Petrai Ambrosiai;* and in *Silbury-hill,* we may contemplate the *mount* of the *assemblies:* but what *third* kind of British monument is there, which displays the effect of great labour in *lifting a stone,* unless it be the enormous *Cromlech?*

Ketti is a derivative of *Ket,* and this must have implied an *ark* or *chest;* for we still retain its diminutive form, *Keten,* to denote a *small* chest, or cabinet.

I have had frequent occasion to remark, that Ceridwen, the Arkite goddess, is distinguished by the name of *Kêd.* Aneurin, in his Gododin, repeatedly calls her by this name, and speaks of *Cibno Kêd* as synonymous with *Pair Ceridwen,* the *cauldron of Ceridwen,* or sacred vase of Ceres. Now, those who are at all conversant in Cambro-British writing, must be aware, that *Kêd* and *Kêt* are precisely the same word, it being usual in our old orthography, to write the final *t,* where at present we use the *d.* Thus we have *bot, bod; cat, cad; tat, tad;* and a hundred more; for the rule is general, and almost without exception.

From the things which were produced out of the *ark,* or *chest,* the word *Ked* figuratively implies a *benefit, aid, re-*

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* W. Archaiol. V. II. p. 70.

lief; wherefore *Maen Ket-ti* signifies the *stone of the arkite power,* or *the stone of beneficence:* and it could have been no other than the ponderous covering of that cell which represented the *ark,* and which was eminently dedicated to the *beneficent* Ceres.*

I have now shewn, that these monuments frequently retain the name of *Arthur,* the mythological representative of Noah, and the husband of *Gwenhwyvar, the lady on the summit of the water;* that is, the *ark,* or its *substitute*—that the same monuments are distinguished by several titles, which imply an *ark,* or *chest*—that they commemorate the various names and characters of *Ceridwen,* the genius of the ark, whilst one of them, in particular, is distinguished by the name of her votary, *Taliesin*—that they commemorate the superstition of the Druids, both by their names and their local situation—that they are reported to have been used as prisons—and that the mysteries of Ceridwen and her daughter, were celebrated in the circle of the Gyvylchi, to which the Cromlech and its *Kist Vaen* are attached.

And from these premises I infer, that such monuments generally had a relation to that ceremony, which is mystically described as the aspirant's confinement in the *womb* of Ceridwen, whence he was born again, and thus became her mystical *child.* For this confinement of the aspirant, which preceded his being shut up in the coracle, and cast into the sea, in the course of the greater mysteries, could have meant nothing more than his inclosure in some

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* I find this goddess described by several derivatives of Kêd or Ket, as *Kedig, Kedwy, Y Gedawl,* which equally imply the *Arkite* and the *beneficent.*

cell, which was sacred to that goddess. And Taliesin has told us, that the *Llan* or *cell* in which he was inclosed, was *Uch llawr,* above the surface of the ground.

Of the ceremony of imprisoning the noviciates in such cells, we may find some farther hints in the mythological Triads.

Thus—"The three pre-eminent prisoners of the island " of Britain, were *Llyr Llediaith,* in the prison of Euros- " wydd the sovereign, *Madawc,* the son of *Medron,* and " *Gwair,* the son of *Geiriawn.* And one was pre-eminent " over the three, namely, *Arthur,* who was imprisoned " three nights in the inclosure of *Oeth* and *Anoeth,* and " three nights with the *lady* of *Pendragon,* and three " nights in the prison of *Kûd,* under the *flat stone* of " *Echemeint:* and one youth released him from the three " prisons, namely, *Goreu,* the son of *Cystenin,* his ne- " phew."*

The whole of this account was apparently extracted from some ancient mythological tale, relating to the deluge, and to certain mysteries which were celebrated in memorial of it. A short analysis of the circumstances will evince the probability of this fact.

The first of the noted prisoners was *Llyr Llediaith,* that is, *half language, or mysterious representation of the sea.*†

Our heralds have not only given *Caractacus,* the celebrated hero of the first century, a grandfather of this name; but have also furnished this grandfather with a long series of progenitors: so that we have *Llyr Llediaith*, ab *Paror*, ab *Ceri hir Llyngwyn*, ab *Ceidog*, ab *Arth*, ab *Meirion*, ab *Eranit*, ab *Eidol*.*

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* W. Archaiol. V. II. p. 12. Tri. 50.

† Or, taking the words in the order in which they stand—"Sea of mystery."

But as these heralds could have had no authority for such early pedigrees, excepting the mystical poems of the Bards, and some old tales, which were purely mythological; as it has been very usual, since the days of Geoffry of Monmouth, to mistake British mythology for history; and as the interpretation of proper names generally furnishes the best key to Bardic *ænigmas*, it may not be amiss to try the series now before us by this rule.

Here, then, we are presented with the *mysterious representation of the sea*, the son of *him who remained*, the son of the *lofty seed of the white lake* (reputed the first navigator amongst the ancestors of the Cymry), the son of the *preserver*, the son of the *bear* (*Arth*, from *Arcto*, to confine), the son of the *guardian*, the son of the *vessel*, the son of the *living one*.

To an ordinary reader, this does not sound like the real pedigree of an ancient British prince; it is rather a series of mystical terms, relating to the history of the deluge.

Even if we suppose that these *mythological* titles were conferred upon the ancestors of Caractacus, it is nothing more than an early instance of a custom, which is known to have prevailed in the fifth, and beginning of the sixth century, when the Britons, delivered from the Roman yoke, attempted to re-establish their ancient superstition.

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* Owen's Cam. Biog. V. *Llyr*.

And still, the confinement of *Llyr*, in the prison of *Euroswydd*, the *splendid destroyer*, seems to allude to his initiation into certain mysteries, rather than to his detention at Rome, either with his illustrious grandson, or as a hostage in his place.

The imprisonment of Madawc, who is sometimes styled the son of *Mellt, lightning*, is said, in another Triad, to have been amongst the Gwyddelian Picts; and the legend, probably, alludes to some similar mysteries, which were celebrated in the North of Britain, when the Romans were masters of the South.

The nature of *Gwair's* imprisonment may be easily comprehended, by the assistance of Taliesin's *Preiddeu Annwn*,* *spoils of the deep*, or *ravages of the deluge*, which begins thus—

"I will adore the sovereign, the supreme ruler of the "land! If he extended his dominion over *the shores of the* "*world*, yet in good order was the *prison of Gwair*, in "*Caer Sidi*. Through the mission of Pwyll and Pryderi "(reason and forethought), no one before him entered "into it. The heavy, blue chain didst thou, *O just man!* "endure; and for the spoils of the deep, woful is thy "song; and till the doom shall it remain in the Bardic "prayer. *Thrice the fullness of Prydwen did we enter* "*into the deep; excepting seven, none have returned from* "*Caer Sidi.*"

This is clearly the history of the deluge; and *Gwair, renovation*, the *just man*, being the first and principal person who entered *Caer Sidi,* the *ark,* when the *Supreme* exerted his power over the *shores of the world,* could have been no other than the patriarch himself.

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* Appendix, No. 3.

Gwair is mystically represented in the Triads as the son of *Gwestyl,* the *great tempest:* and in another place, as the son of *Geiriawn, the word of justice.* We are told, that this personage and his family were confined in the prison of *Oeth* and *Anoeth,* from which none of his posterity ever attempted to escape.[*] Hence it appears, that the prison of *Oeth* and *Anoeth* was the same as *Caer Sidi;* that is, in a primary sense, the *ark* itself, and in a secondary acceptation, the *Arkite temple.*

Oeth and *Anoeth* seem to be nothing more than the antiquated orthography of *Wŷth* and *Anwŷth, wrath,* and the *remission of wrath*—or the accumulation and the subsiding of the deluge.

We have seen that Cuhelyn uses the term *Anoeth,* to describe the great temple, before which Hengist committed his outrage—that is, Stonehenge.

Myvir corein mirein *Anoeth.*

"The study of the fair circle of *Anoeth.*"

And Taliesin uses *Di-wyth* and *Gorwyth,* as synonymous with *Anoeth* and *Oeth.*

Yn annwfn y *Di-wyth*
Yn annwfn y *Gorwyth.*[†]

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[*] W. Archaiol. V. II. p. 68. Tri. 61.

[†] W. Archaiol. p. 35. The lines seem to have been transposed by some copyist, who did not understand them.

"In the deep which is *void of wrath;*
"In the deep where *extreme indignation* dwells."

The *perpetual* imprisonment of Gwair and his posterity in this inclosure, can only mean, that the patriarch and his family were once shut up in the ark, and that the Druids acknowledged none as his *legitimate* descendants, but those who were initiated into the *Arkite* mysteries, and who perpetually kept *within the pale,* or strictly adhered to the laws of their institution.

Hence we perceive, that Arthur's first confinement in the prison of *Oeth* and *Anoeth,* was the same with that of Gwair; or, in other words, that the Arthur of mythology is only another representative of the polyonymous patriarch. And this idea is confirmed by the same poem of Taliesin upon the *spoils of the deep,* where we find Arthur presiding in the sacred ship:—"When we went with *Arthur* in his "splendid labours, excepting seven, none returned from "*Caer Vediwid.*"

Arthur's second imprisonment with *Wen Bendragon,* or the *lady of the supreme leader,* out of which Geoffry of Monmouth has worked up a curious tale, is either a duplicate of the same history, taken from an old mythological allegory, or else it refers to the mysteries of Ceres. For the lady here introduced was *Eigyr,* the *generative principle,* or the *source of generation,* and therefore the Magna Mater, *Ceridwen,* or *Ceres.*

Arthur's third imprisonment in the cell of *Kŭd,* or *Kyd,* under the *flat stone* of Echemaint, evidently alludes to the British mysteries, which commemorated the Diluvian history. And the cell appropriated to this emblematical confinement, must have been of that kind, which we still discover under enormous "Flat stones," in various parts of Britain.

As to the name of *Kyd*, the proprietor of this prison, I have already remarked, that it is an appellation of the Arkite goddess, and of the ark itself.—"Let truth be ascribed "to Menwyd, the dragon chief of the world, who formed "the curvatures of *Kyd*, which passed the dale of grievous "water, having the fore-part stored with corn, and mounted "aloft, with the connected serpents."*

I also observe, that in an old christian poem, which goes under the name of Taliesin, the *fish* which swallowed *Jonas* is called Kyd.—

A ddug Jonas o berfedd Kyd †

"Who brought Jonas out of the belly of Kyd?"

This is only the Greek Κητος, which Mr. Bryant pronounces to have been an emblem of the ark.‡ Whether our ancestors viewed their Kyd under this emblem or not, I will not pretend to decide; but I observe that, in one old copy on vellum, the cell under the *flat stone* is simply called Carchar *Hûd*, the prison of *mystery*.

The name *Echemaint*, which is given to this stone, I do not understand: in another copy, it is called *Y Llech a Chymmraint*, the *flat stone of social privilege:* and this seems to describe an instrument of *initiation*, which admitted the aspirant to the privileges of the *regenerate* society.

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* Appendix, No. 12.

† W. Archaiol. p. 43.

‡ Analysis, V. II. p. 301 and 408.

But to dismiss this inquiry. Under what *flat stones* could the Arkite goddess have confined her votaries, in order to confer these privileges upon them, unless it were those which are attached to her sanctuaries, which cover receptacles proper for the purpose, which are denominated *stone arks*, and which, in their local designations, retain the name of Arthur and Ceridwen, and the memorial of Arkite mysteries?

Arthur is said to have been released from each of the three prisons by *Goreu, Best*, the son of *Cystenin*, which is the British name of *Constantine;* but no son of that prince could have released the patriarch from the prototype of the mystic cell. We may therefore suppose, that the compiler of the tale plays upon the sound of the word, and that we ought to understand *Cistenin, the minister of the ark.*

SECTION V.

Traditions relating to the Progress, Revolutions, and Suppression of the British Superstition.

A SUCCESSFUL investigation of the progress and revolutions of Druidism, might be expected to attract the notice of the public. It would certainly be curious to trace the changes, whether improvements or corruptions, which took place in the religion of our early progenitors, and to have an opportunity of discriminating between those rites and superstitions, which they originally brought with them into Britain, and those which, in the course of ages, they adopted from other nations, or devised from their own fancy.

But for the basis of such an investigation, we want an authentic historical document, enlighted by accurate chronology, and divested of allegorical obscurity. Upon this subject, no such aid is to be found. The religion of the Britons, like that of other heathens, grew up in the dark. All that we have left is a mass of mythological notices, which were certainly written in ages, when Druidism was in high esteem, and had many votaries: and from those, the genuine opinion and tradition of the Britons, during those ages, may be in some measure collected. From these ænigmatical tablets, I shall attempt to make a few slight sketches, with the hope of gratifying the curious, and affording some little light to the antiquary; though from the nature of my materials, I almost despair of amusing the general reader.

In the first place, it may be inferred from the tone of the evidence already produced, that the primitive religion of the Cymry (long before the age of the oldest Bard who is now extant,) was a kind of apostasy from the patriarchal religion, or a mere corruption of it.

In the tradition of this people, I have remarked the local account of a vessel, from which they assert, that their progenitors sprung after a general deluge: I have noticed their *exclusive* claim to the universal patriarch of all nations; I have observed, that their superstition strongly verged from all points, towards the history of the deluge, and towards that system of theology, which Mr. Bryant denominates *Arkite*: I have shewn that they worshipped the patriarch, as a deity, though they had not forgotten, that he was a just and pious man: and I think I have proved, that the *Ceridwen* of the Druids was as much the *genius* of the ark, as the *Ceres* and *Isis* of our great mythologist.

If the Bards exhibit, together with this Arkite superstition, that mixture of *Sabian* idolatry, or worship of the host of heaven, which the second volume of the Analysis traces, as blended with the same mythology, over great part of the ancient world; yet we observe, that the *Solar* divinity is always represented as the *third*, or youngest of the great objects of adoration: hence it may be inferred, that the worship of the patriarch, in conjunction with the sun, was an innovation, rather than an original and fundamental principle, of the Druidical religion.

That this opinion was inculcated by our old mythologists, appears from a very singular triad, which I propose to analyze. But the reader of taste may require some apology, for the homeliness of its characters.

Mythologists have never been very scrupulous in the selection of their figures. Gods and their priests have been presented to us, under the form of every animal character, from the elephant and the lion, to the insect and the reptile. And it is not to be expected, that our ancestors should have been more delicate in their choice, than other nations more enlightened and more refined.

Without any such affectation of superior taste, they bring forward three distinct states of the British hierarchy, but all of them more or less *Arkite,* under the characters of three mighty *swine herds.*

Their disciples, of course, consisted of a multitude of *swine.* I am not *calling them names*—these are the titles they thought proper to assume: and no doubt, they regarded them as very respectable and becoming.

Though this representation be partly peculiar to the Britons, it has still, some analogy with the notions and the mythology of other heathens.

Thus, we are told that the priests of the Cabiri were styled *Sues—swine.* Greece and Rome consecrated the *sow* to Ceres, and gave it the name of the *mystical animal.* The learned and ingenius M. De Gebelin says, that this selection was made, not only because the sow is a very prolific animal, but also, because she *plows the ground,* and because the plough has a figure similar to that of her snout, and produces the same effect.*

The Cymry proceeded somewhat further, but still upon the same road. In Britain, Ceres herself assumes the character of *Hwch*, a *sow;* she addresses her child, or devotee, by the title of *Porchellan*, *little pig;* her congregation are *Moch*, *swine;* her chief priest is *Turch*, a *boar*, or *Gwydd Hwch*, *boar of the wood, or grove;* and her *Hierarchy* is *Meichiad*, a *swine herd.*

The triad which I have mentioned, upon the subject of the *three mighty swine herds*, is preserved in several copies,† from a collation of which, I shall subjoin an English version, and add some remarks upon each particular.

" The first of the mighty swine herds of the island of
" Britain, was *Pryderi*, the son of *Pwyll*, chief of *Annwn*,
" who kept the swine of his foster-father, Pendaran Dyved,
" in the vale of Cwch, in Emlyn; whilst his own father,
" Pwyll, was in Annwn."

In order to understand the meaning of this mythology, it will be necessary first of all, to take some notice of the persons and places here introduced.

Pryderi, called also *Gwynvardd Dyved*, was the son of *Pwyll*, *Lord of Dyved*, the son of *Meirig*, the son of *Arcol*, with the long hand, the son of *Pyr*, or *Pur* of the East, the son of *Llion* the ancient.*

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* Monde Primitif. Tom. IV. p. 579.

† W. Archaiol. V. II. p. 6. 20. 73. 77.

Though the vanity of certain Welsh families, has inscribed these princes in the first page of their pedigrees, it would be absurd to connect their history with any known chronological period. It is purely mythological, as appears from the very import of their names.

Pryderi is *deep thought*, or *mature consideration:* and the general subject of this *thought* may be collected from his other title—*Gwynvardd Dyved—Druid of Demetia.*

Pwyll, his father, is *reason, discretion, prudence*, or *patience.* That both the father and the son were characters, wholly mystical, or personifications of *abstract* ideas; is shewn in Taliesin's *spoils of the deep*,† where we are told, that the diluvian patriarch first entered the ark, by the counsel of *Pwyll* and *Pryderi.*

Meirig is a *guardian.* In this series, the word ought to be translated, though it has been the proper name of several Britons.

Ar-côl may imply the man of the *lofty mount;* but as *Arcol* with the long hand, was avowedly of *Eastern* extraction; it is probable his name may have been of *Eastern derivation:* and if so, he may have been no less a personage than the great *Hercules*, who was known in the East by similar titles, as we are informed by Mr. Bryant;

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* Cambrian Biog. under the articles *Pryderi, Pwyll*, and *Meirig.*

† Appendix, No. 3.

who tells us, that in the neighbourhood of Tyre and Sidon, the *chief deity* went by the name of *Ourchol,* the same as *Archel* and *Arcles* of Egypt, whence came the *Heracles* and *Hercules* of Greece and Rome.*

But the history of Hercules, as we learn from the same author, alludes to a mixture of *Arkite* and *Sabian* idolatry. —" It is said of Hercules, that he traversed a vast sea, in " a cup, or *skiff,* which *Nereus,* or *Oceanus* sent him for " his preservation: the same history is given to *Helius,* (the " sun) who is said to have traversed the ocean in the same " vehicle." †

If the critics can pardon an attempt to identify *Arcol,* in the character of Hercules, I need not dread their censure for supposing, that his father *Pyr,* or *Pur of the East,* is to be found amongst the known connexions of that Demigod.

Pyr is the Greek name of *fire,* and mythologically of the *sun,* who was the same as Hercules. And the great analyzer of mythology assures us, that *Pur* was the ancient name of Latian *Jupiter,* the father of Hercules; that he was the deity of fire; that his name was particularly retained amongst the people of Præneste, who had been addicted to the *rites of fire;* that they called their chief god *Pur,* and dealt particularly in *divination by lots,* termed of old, Purim.‡

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* Analysis, V. I. p. 40.

† Ibid. V. II. p. 404.

‡ Ibid. V. I. p. 124.

From hence it may be conjectured, with some degree of probability, that this mystical family, which was of *Eastern* origin, had a certain connexion with the history of *Jupiter* and *Hercules*.

But lest we should lose sight of the *fundamental* principles of Arkite theology, our mythological herald takes care to inform us, that Pyr, of the East, was the son of *Llion the Ancient*, that is, the deluge, or the Diluvian god: for the waters of *Llion* are the great abyss, which is contained under the earth, and which once *burst forth*, and *overwhelmed the whole world.*

This mythological pedigree, therefore, only declares the *Arkite* origin of a certain mystical system, which was introduced into Britain through the medium of some *Eastern people*.

The characters here introduced, are represented as princes of Demetia, the country of *Seithenin Saidi*, who is *Saturn* or *Noah*. This region was so greatly addicted to mystical rites, that it was called, by way of eminence, *Bro yr Hûd*, the *land of mystery*, and said to have been formerly enveloped in *Llengêl*, a *veil of concealment*.

But we are not immediately to conclude, that Pryderi conducted his *swine*, according to the rules of his Eastern ancestors. These were not the property of his father and grandfather, but the herd of *Pendaran, lord of thunder*, otherwise called *Arawn*, the *Arkite*, and managed under his supreme administration. *His* authority was already established in the West, and, as we shall presently see, it was different from that of Arcol, and Pyr of the East.

Pryderi kept the swine of his *foster-father, Pendaran,* in the vale of *Cwch,* the *boat,* or *ark,* in *Emlyn,* the *clear lake,* whilst his own father, Pwyll, was in *Annwn,* the deep —the *deluge.*

I must leave the great swine-herd to the management of his charge, whilst I seek an elucidation of this mythology, from a curious tale upon the subject of Pwyll's adventures.*

This tale manifestly alludes to Arkite theology; and I think, also, to the reformation of some foreign abuses, or innovations, which were intermixing with the doctrines and rites of the natives, and to the rejection of *Sabian* idolatry, or *solar worship.*

The reader may judge for himself, by the following abstract:

Pwyll, lord of the seven provinces of Dyved, being at *Arberth, high grove,* one of his chief mansions, appoints a hunting party—that is, the *celebration of mysteries:* thus Ceridwen is said to have *hunted* the aspirant.

The place which he chose for this exercise, was *Glyn-Cwch,* the vale of the *boat,* or *ark.* Accordingly, he set out from Arberth, and came to the head of the *grove* of *Diurwya,* the *solemn preparation of the egg.*

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* Cambrian Register, V. I. p. 177, and V. II. p. 332. From the Red Book of Jesus Col. Oxford, a MS. of the 14th century.

Pliny's account of the preparation of the *Anguinum*, by the Druids, in the character of serpents, is well known. Mr. Bryant also observes, that an egg was a very ancient emblem of the ark; and that in the Dionusiaca, and in other mysteries, one part of the *nocturnal* ceremony consisted in the consecration of an *egg*.*

In this grove of the preparation of the egg, Pwyll continued that night; and early in the morning he proceeded to the vale of the boat, and turned out his dogs—*priests*, who were called Κυνες,† dogs—under the wood, or *grove*.

He blew his horn—that is, the herald's horn—Thus Taliesin says—" I have been *Mynawg*, wearing a collar, with " my *horn* in my hand: he is not entitled to the presidency, " who does not keep my word."‡

Pwyll, entering fully upon the chace, and listening to the cry of the pack, began to hear distinctly the cry of *another* pack, which was of a *different tone* from that of his own dogs, and was coming in an *opposite* direction. This alludes to some mystic rites, which essentially differed from those of his Eastern ancestors, *Arcol* and *Pyr*.

The strange pack pursued a stag—the *aspirant*—into a level open spot—the *adytum*—in the centre of the grove, and there threw him upon the ground. Pwyll, without regarding the stag, fixed his eyes with admiration upon the

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* Analysis, V. II. p. 360.

† Κυνες, ʽοι Μαντεις. Schol. in Lycoph. V. 459.

‡ Cadair Teyrn On. Appendix, No. 4.

dogs, which were all of a *shining white hue,* with *red ears.*—Such is the popular notion of the Welsh, respecting the colour of *Cwn Annwn,* the *dogs of the deep*—a mystical transformation of the *Druids,* with their *white robes* and *red tiaras*

The prince drives away the pack which had killed the stag, and calls his own dogs upon him—thus, initiating the *aspirant* into his own Eastern mysteries.

Whilst he is thus engaged, the master of the *white pack* comes up, reproves him for his uncourtly behaviour, informs him that he is a king, wearing a crown, as sovereign lord of *Annwn,* the *deep,* and that his name is *Arawn,* the *Arkite**—this is the personage who is also styled *Pendaran —lord of thunder.*

Pwyll having expressed a wish to atone for his imprudent offence, and to obtain the friendship of this august stranger:

"Behold, says Arawn, how thou mayest succeed in thy "wishes. There is a *person whose dominion is opposite to* "*mine; who makes war upon me continually:* this is *Havgan,* "*summershine,* a king also of Annwn: by delivering me "from his invasions, which thou canst easily do, thou "shall obtain my friendship."

This *summershine,* who invades the dominions of the diluvian patriarch, can be no other than the *Solar Divinity*, whose rites had begun to intermix with, and partly to supersede the more simple Arkite memorials.—Here then, we have a direct censure of that monstrous absurdity, of venerating the patriarch, in conjunction with the *sun*. Pwyll, or *Reason*, is represented as having destroyed this *Apollo*.

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* In the Cambrian Register, Arawn is oddly translated, "of the silver "tongue." The word may imply eloquence; but considering his character, I rather think it comes from ארון, *Aron,* an *ark,* or *chest.*

It may be conjectured, however, from the works of the British Bards, that he soon revived again, and claimed all his honours.

But to go on with the story—It was proposed that Pwyll should assume the form of *Arawn*; that he should immediately leave his own dominions, and proceed to *Annwn*, the *deep*, where he was to preside, in the character and person of the king, for a complete year. This must mean, that he was to be initiated into *Arkite* mysteries, or to pass through a representation of the same scenes, which the patriarch had experienced.—Thus Noah had presided in the ark, for precisely the same period, over the great deep, or the deluged world.

On the day that should complete the year, Pwyll was to kill the usurper, *Summershine*, or the *Solar Idol*, with a single stroke; and in the mean time, Arawn assumes the form of Pwyll, and engages to take his dominions under his special charge.

It was during this year, of the mystical deluge, that *Pryderi* guarded the *swine* of his foster-father, *Arawn*, or *Pendaran*, in the vale of the boat. His herd, therefore, was purely *Arkite*.

Pwyll, having determined to engage in this great enterprize, is conducted by the king to the palace of the deep—as Noah was conducted to the ark.—Being received by the whole court, without suspicion, he is attended in due form, by Arawn's ministers, and lodged in the royal bed—the Παϛος or cell of initiation—where he preserves an *inviolate silence:* and as a man, eminently just and upright, shews a wonderful instance of continence in his deportment towards the queen, who is the fairest woman in the world, and supposes him to be her own husband.—Such were the trials of fortitude and self-government, to which the aspirants were exposed.

On the appointed day, Pwyll kills the usurper, *Summer-shine,* and at the completion of the year, returns from the palace of the deep, into his own dominions, which he finds in an improved and most flourishing condition, under the administration of the great Arawn, with whom he contracts a perpetual friendship.

This part of the tale blends a mystical account of the deluge, with the history of those mysteries which were celebrated in memory of the great preservation.

The prince being now re-established in his palace, at *Arberth,* or *high grove,* provided a banquet—or solemn sacrifice—for himself and his retinue. After the first repast, the whole company walked forth to the top of the *Gorsedd,* or seat of presidency, which stood above the palace. Such was the quality of this seat, that whoever sat upon it, should either receive a wound, or see a miracle.

Pwyll, regardless of consequences, sat upon the mystical seat: and presently, both the prince himself, and the whole of his retinue, beheld a *lady,* mounted upon a horse of a pale bright colour, great, and very high.

The lady herself wore a garment, glittering like gold, and advanced along the main road, which led towards the Gorsedd. Her horse, in the opinion of all the spectators, had a slow and even pace, and was coming in the direction of the high seat.

The reader will have no difficulty in comprehending, that this splendid lady was the *Iris,* riding in her humid cloud; and that she was coming from the court of *Arawn,* upon a friendly errand. But as she was unknown to all the company now present, Pwyll sent a messenger to meet her, and learn who she was. One of his train rose up to execute the prince' s order; but no sooner was he come into the road, opposite to the fair stranger, than she passed by him. He pursued her on foot with the utmost speed: but the faster he ran, the more he was distanced by the lady, though she still seemed to continue the same gentle pace, with which she had set out at first. She was then followed by a messenger upon a fleet horse, but still without any better success. The same vain experiment was tried the next day.

The prince now perceived, that there was a mystery in the appearance: yet, being persuaded, that the lady had business to communicate to some one in that field, and hoping that the honour of her commands might be reserved for himself, he gets ready his courser, and undertakes the enterprize on the third day. The lady appeared: the prince rode to meet her: she passed by him with a steady gentle pace: he followed her a full speed, but to no purpose.—Then Pwyll said—

The remainder of the story is lost; consequently, our curiosity, as to the adventures of Pwyll and the mystical lady, cannot be gratified.

But I have no doubt, that this lady in the splendid robe was the *rainbow,* that sacred token of reconciliation, which appeared to Noah after the deluge, and which was universally commemorated in Gentile mythology.

The mounting of her upon a horse, seems to have been a British device. Thus, we are told in the mystical poem, called *The Chair of Ceridwen,* that Gwydion, Hermes, formed for the goddess of the rainbow a stately steed, upon the springing grass, and with illustrious trappings.

The circumstance of the vain pursuit of this phænomenon, which seemed to move so calmly and steadily along, may remind several of my readers of a childish adventure of their own. Many a child has attempted to approach the rainbow, for the purpose of contemplating its beauty.

Upon the whole it is evident, that though the transcriber of this ancient tale may have introduced some touches of the manners of his own age, yet the main incidents faithfully delineate that Arkite mythology, which pervades the writings of the primitive Bards; at the same time that they pass a severe censure upon solar worship, as a corrupt innovation.

Having taken this view of the great *swine-herd, Pryderi,* or *deep thought,* I proceed to consider the adventures of the next in order, where we shall have some hints of the channel, by which this innovation of Sabian idolatry was introduced.

The learned author of the Mysteries of the Cabiri, gives me an opportunity of prefixing a few hints, which may serve to keep our British mythologists in countenance.

Having remarked from Tacitus, that the Estyi, a people of Germany, worshipped the mother of the gods, and that the symbol which they used was a *boar*, Mr. Faber thus proceeds.

" Rhea, or the mother of the gods, as it has been abun-
" dantly shewn, was the same as Ceres, Venus, Isis, or
" Derceto. She was, in short, the ark of Noah, from
" which issued all the hero-gods of paganism. With re-
" gard to the boar, used by this German tribe as an em-
" blem, we find it introduced very conspicuously into
" many of those legendary traditions, which relate to the
" great event of the deluge. It appears to have been one
" of the symbols of the ark, although not adopted so
" generally as the *mare*, or the heifer. In the first Hindoo
" *Avatar*, Vishnou assumes the form of a fish; and in the
" third, that of a *boar*, when he is represented as emerging
" from the midst of the ocean, and supporting the world
" upon his tusks. Both these incarnations, as well as the
" second, are supposed by Sir William Jones to allude to
" the history of the flood; whence, as we have already
" seen that a *fish* was emblematical of the *ark*, it is not
" unreasonable to conclude, that the *boar* may be so like-
" wise. Accordingly, in the account which Plutarch gives
" us of the Egyptian Osiris, he mentions, that Typhon, or
" the *deluge*, being in pursuit of one of those animals,
" found the *ark*, which contained the body of Osiris, and
" rent it asunder." *

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* Myst. of the Cabiri, V. I. p. 220.

The author subjoins the following note:

"Perhaps, if the matter be expressed with perfect accuracy, we ought rather to say, that a *boar* was symbolical of *Noah*, and a *sow* of the *ark*. Hence we find, that as Vishnou was feigned to have metamorphosed himself into a *boar*, so the nurse of Arkite Jupiter, or in other words, the *Noëtic ship*, is said by Agathocles to have been a sow."*

"Coll, the son of *Collvrewi—Rod*, the son of *Rod* of terrors, guarded *Henwen—old lady*, the sow of *Dallwyr Dallben—mystagogue, chief of mystics*, in the vale of *Dallwyr—mystics*, in *Cornwall*. The sow was big with young; and as it had been prophesied, that the island of Britain would suffer detriment from her progeny, Arthur collected the forces of the country, and went forth for the purpose of destroying it. The sow, in the mean time, being about to farrow, proceeded as far as the promontory of *Land's-end*, in *Cornwall*, where she put to sea, with the swine-herd after her. And she first came to land at *Aber Tarrogi*, in *Gwent Is Coed*, her guardian still keeping hold of the bristles, wherever she wandered, by land or sea.

"At *Wheatfield*, in Gwent, she *laid* three *grains* of *wheat*, and three *bees*: hence, Gwent is famous to this day for producing the best wheat and honey.

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* Agath, apud Athen. Deipnos. Lib. IX. p. 375.

"From Gwent, she proceeded to Dyved; and in *Llonnio* "*Llonwen,* the *pleasant spot of the tranquil lady, laid* a "grain of *barley,* and a *pig:* and the barley and swine of "Dyved are become proverbial.

"After this, she goes towards Arvon, and in Lleyn she "laid a *grain* of *rye*: since which time, the best rye is pro-"duced in Lleyn and Eivionydd.

"Proceeding from thence, to the vicinity of the cliff of "*Cyverthwch,* in Eryri, she *laid* the *cub* of a *wolf,* and "an *eaglet.* Coll gave the eagle to *Brynach,* a Northern "Gwyddelian prince, of *Dinas Affaraon,* and the present "proved detrimental to him. The wolf was given to *Men-"waed,* lord of Arllechwedd.

"These were the wolf of Menwaed, and the eagle of Bry-"nach, which in after times became so famous.

"From hence, the sow went to the *black stone* in Arvon, "under which she *laid* a *kitten,* which Coll threw from the "top of the stone into the *Menai.* The sons of *Paluc,* in "Mona, took it up, and nursed it, to their own injury. "This became the celebrated *Paluc cat,* one of the three "chief molesters of Mona, which were nursed within the "island. The second of these molestors was *Daronwy;* and "the third was Edwin, the Northumbrian king."

I should not have exhibited this fantastical story, were I not persuaded that it contains some important tradition respecting the progress of superstition in our country, of which no other account is to be found and that the greatest part of it may be explained.

Before we attend to the mystical *sow*, and her ill-omened progeny, it may be proper to take some notice of her guardian.

Rod, the son of the *rod* of *terrors,* or of *religious awe,* the hero of this singular tale, cannot be regarded as an individual person. He is an ideal character, implying a principal agent, or the aggregate of agents, in conducting a particular mode of superstition.

Coll is repeatedly mentioned in the mythological Triads. He is there classed with the great deified patriarch, *Hu Gadarn,* as one of three personages, who conferred distinguished benefits upon the Cymry nation. He has the credit of having first introduced *wheat* and *barley* into Britain, where only *rye* and *oats* had been known before his time.* Hence it appears, that he must have been a great favourite of *Ceres,* the goddess of cultivation.

He is again brought forwards, as one of the three great presidents of mysteries.† And here, we must regard his doctrine and institutes, as comprehending the mystical theology and rites, which prevailed in a certain age, or over certain districts of these islands.

From a collation of the passages in which this notice occurs, it may be deduced, that there had been three distinct modes, or stages of mysticism, amongst the Britons.

That of *Menu,* the son of the *three loud calls,* and of

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* W. Archaiol. V. II. p. 67.

† Ibid. p. 7, 71, 77.

Uthyr Bendragon, or *the wonderful supreme leader,* was the first of these.

That of *Coll,* the son of *Collvrewi,* and of *Eiddilic Corr,* or *Gwyddelin Corr,* constituted the second: and this agreed with the mode of *Rhuddlwm Gawr,* or *the red, bony giant.*

And that of *Math,* the son of *Mathonwy, Drych eil Cibddar,* and *Gwydion ab Don* was the third.

The first of these modes or stages, I suppose to have been that corruption of the patriarchal religion, or the more simple Arkite theology, which originally prevailed amongst the Cymry, and of which we have already had some hints, under the characters of *Pwyll* and *Pryderi.*

As to the second; when we recollect, that *Coll* first began the superintendance of his mystical sow in *Cornwall,* which either was one of the *Cassiterides* of the ancients, or else certainly carried on an intercourse with those tin islands, it may be conjectured, that the *red bony giant,* the original introducer of this superstition, and who is represented as the *uncle* and mystical preceptor of Coll, was no other than the *Phœnician,* or *red merchant,* half *Canaanite,* and half *Edomite,* who traded with the *tin islands.* And as this became the system of *Corr,* the *Coraniad,* or *Belgian,* and also of *Gwyddelin,* the *Gwyddelian,* whom our writers regard as of the same family with the other, it appears to be the meaning of the Triads, that the Belgæ of Britain and Ireland adopted the mode of this stranger. Of the introduction of the same mysticism into Wales, and immediately from Cornwall, we have a more detailed account in the adventures of Coll and his wonderful sow. This superstition contained memorials of the deluge; but it verged more strongly towards Sabian idolatry.

The third mode, namely, that of *Math, Drych,* and *Gwydion,* seems to have been a mixture of the two former; that is, of the superstition of the original Cymry, and the more idolatrous rites of the Phœnicians: or that confusion of principles which we find in the old British Bards, and which Mr. Bryant has detected amongst many ancient nations.

Coll is, then, the great agent in the adventitious branch of the Druidical religion.

Having thus seen what is meant by his character, we will proceed to the history of his *sow:* and we shall find, that however absurd it may be in the literal sense, great part of it will admit of explanation upon mythological principles.

The name of this mystical animal was *Hênwen, old lady,* a proper title for the *great mother, Da-Mater,* or *Ceres,* to whom the *sow* was sacred. But Ceres, or the great mother, as Mr. Bryant has proved, was the *genius of the ark.* Agreeably to this decision, it has occurred to our countrymen, that under this allegory of a *sow,* we must understand the history of a *ship.* Upon the story of Coll and his mystical charge, Mr. Owen remarks, that under this extraordinary recital, there seems to be preserved the record of the appearance of a strange ship on the coasts, under the appellation of a sow: and that it was probably a *Phœnician* ship, which imported into the island the various things here mentioned.*

And again in his Dictionary, under the word *Hwch,* a *sow,* the same author tells us—" It has been also used as an " epithet for a ship, for the same reason as *Banw* is applied " to a *pig,* and to a *coffer;* the abstract meaning of the " word being characteristic of the form of both. There is " a tradition in Monmouthshire, that the first corn sown " in Wales was at *Maes Gwenith,* Wheatfield, in that " county, and was brought there by a *ship;* which, in a " Triad alluding to the same event, is called *Hwch*"—that is, a *sow.*

That this tale alludes to the history of *a ship* or *vessel,* there can be no doubt: and we first hear of its being in *Cornwall,* that part of Britain which is supposed to have had a peculiar intercourse with the Phœnicians.

But, in a literal sense, wolves and eagles must have been very useless, as well as unnecessary, articles of importation to the ancient Britons. This was a *sacred* ship. Its cargo consisted, not in common merchandise, but in religious symbols and apparatus. And there is every reason to conclude, that it was itself a symbol of the ark.

I have already observed, that the name of this mystical vehicle, *old lady,* was a proper epithet for the great mother —the *ark.*

The depositing of the various kinds of *grain,* points to the office of Ceres, who was the genius of the *ark;* to the British *Kêd,* who passed through the deluge, *stored with corn;* and to the character of Ceridwen, who is styled *Ogyrven Amhad,* the *goddess of various seeds,* and whose mysteries were *Arkite.*

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* Camb. Biog. V. *Coll.*

The whimsical use of the verb *dodwi,* to *lay,* as a hen lays her eggs, when applied to the parturition of the mystical *sow,* or *ship,* cannot be accounted for, till we recollect, that our *Arkite* goddess is styled and described as a *hen.*

And this symbolical *sow,* like the *Argo* of antiquity, proceeds by land, as well as by sea, attended by her mystical priest.

The place from whence she began her progress, and the persons to whom she belonged, with equal clearness point out her mythological character. For this sow, we are told, was the property of *Dallwyr,* the *blind men,* or Μυσται of *Dallben,* the *mystagogue;* and was guarded in *Glyn Dallwyr,* the *glen,* or *vale,* of the *mystics,* in Cornwall.

To this spot she had been confined during a considerable period; for the Britons were *aware* of her being there, and were jealous of the innovations which she might introduce. Hence the *old prophecy,* that *Britain would be injured by her progeny.* She was, therefore, of foreign extraction; and the doctrines and rites of her priests differed from the more simple religion of the natives. Wherefore, as soon as she began to *propagate,* or *produce converts* in the country, the mythological Arthur, the *mystical head* of the native, and hitherto patriarchal religion, collected the forces of the island, in order to exterminate her race; but the design proved abortive—the novel system gained ground.

Let us now consider the various deposits of this mystical vehicle.

The first consisted of *three grains of wheat,* and a *Triad of bees.* The wheat, every one knows to be the fruit of Ceres: and in Britain, the person who aspired to the mysteries of that goddess, was transformed into a mystical *grain of pure wheat.* And as to the bees of mythology, the great analyzer of ancient tradition proves, from a multitude of circumstances, that the *Melissæ,* or *bees, were certainly female attendants in the Arkite temples.**

The appropriation of this title to the priestesses of Ceres, Mr. Bryant, as usual, attributes to an error of the Greeks in the interpretation of a foreign term. If this be allowed, the same blunders constantly pervading the sacred vocabularies of the Greeks and Britons, might be insisted upon as arguments, that the latter borrowed their theology immediately from the former, which I think was not the case in general. The history of the *provident bee,* the architect of her own commodious *cell,* in which she weathers out the destructive winter, might supply another reason for making her the symbol of an Arkite priestess.

But passing over our author's etymologies, and taking along with us his historical deductions, it will appear, that the sacred ship which brought the bees, was a representa-

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* Analysis, V. II. p. 337.

tive of the ark. For the same distinguished writer, who first proved that Ceres was the genius of the ark, has also shewn, that she was styled *Melissa,* or the *bee,* and that the *Melissæ* were her priestesses.

So that in this British tale, we have the record of an Arkite temple, founded in Monmouthshire by a colony of priests, which came from Cornwall, with an establishment of three Arkite ministers.

The *grain* of barley, and the *pig,* or one of her own species, which the mystical sow deposited in *the pleasant spot of the tranquil lady,* in Demetia, or Pembrokeshire, amounts to nearly the same thing.

The next remarkable deposit, consisted in the *cub* of a *wolf,* and the *eaglet.*

The wolf of mythology, according to Mr. Bryant, related to the worship of the sun.* The eagle also, he tells us, was one of the insignia of Egypt, and was particularly sacred to the sun. It was called *Ait,* or Αετος; and Homer alludes to the original meaning of the word, when he terms the eagle Αιετος αιθων.†

Hence it appears, that the *Arkite* mysteries of this *old lady* were intimately blended with an idolatrous worship of the *sun*—that *usurper,* whom we have seen the great *Arawn* king of the *deep,* so anxious to remove.

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* Analysis V. I. p. 78.

† Ibid. p. 19.

The eagle and the wolf were deposited in *Eryri*, or *Snowdon;* and Coll is said to have presented the former to a Northern prince, and the latter to a lord of Arllechwedd: which must be understood to mean, that these symbols of *solar* worship were introduced from Cornwall, by a circuitous route, into the regions of Snowdon, and from thence into North Britain, and Arllechwedd.

The place where the eagle and wolf were deposited, deserves attention. It was on the top of *Rhiw Gyverthwch*, the *panting cliff*, in Snowdon, and in a structure calle *Dinas Affaraon*, or *Pharaon*, the *city of the higher powers.** The scite was upon the road from the promontory of Lleyn, to that part of the coast which is opposite to Mona, for the mystical sow takes it in her way. Hence it seems to have been the same which is now known by the name of *Y Ddinas, the city*, thus described by the Annotator upon Camden.

" On the top of *Penmaen*, stands a lofty and impreg-
" nable hill, called Braich y Ddinas (the ridge of the city),
" where we find the ruinous walls of an exceeding strong
" fortification, encompassed with a triple wall; and within
" *each* wall, the foundation of, at least, a hundred towers,
" all round, and of equal bigness, and about six yards dia-
" meter within the walls. The walls of this *Dinas* were, in
" most places, two yards thick, and in some about three.
" This castle seems, while it stood, impregnable, there
" being no way to offer any assault to it; the hill being so

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* *Pharaon* seems to be the British name of the Cabiri, their priests, called *Pheryll*, were skilled in metallurgy, and are said to have possessed certain books upon mysterious subjects.

" very high, steep, and rocky, and the walls of such " strength.——At the summit of this rock, *within the innermost wall*, there is a well, which affords plenty of " water in the dryest summer.——The greatness of the " work, shews that it was a princely fortification, strengthened by nature and workmanship, seated on the top of " one of the highest mountains of that part of Snowdon, " which lies towards the sea."*

The temple of Ceres, in the *Gyvylchi*, is only *about the distance of a mile* from this place. This stately pile, which has left no other local memorial of its greatness, but the emphatical name—" The city," must have been, as I conjecture, the celebrated *Dinas Pharäon*, in the *rocks* of Snowdon, which had also the name of *Dinas Emrys*, or *the ambrosial city*. This was famous, not only for the wolf and eagle, which were deposited by the mystical sow, but also for certain *dragons*,† which appeared in the time of *Beli*, the son of *Manhogan*, or, as we are otherwise told, in the time of *Prydain*, the son of *Aedd the Great* ‡—that is, in the age of the *solar divinity*. In this Dinas, the dragons were lodged by a son of *Beli*, or *child of the sun;* and the destiny of Britain was supposed to depend upon the due concealment of the mystery.§

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* Gibson's Camden Col. 804.

† W. Archaiol. V. II. p. 59, 65.

‡ Beli is represented as the father of the brave *Cassivellaunus*, and the son of *Manhogan, radiated with splendour*. But *Beli* and *Prydain* are titles of the *Helio-arkite* divinity. See *Append*. No. 11, where he is addressed by both these names,

§ W. Archaiol. V. II. p. 9, 11, 66, 78.

As to these *dragons*, the reader has seen that they were harnessed in the car of the *British*, as well as of the *Greek Ceres:* and more than this, their general connexion with solar superstition is acknowledged by the Welsh themselves:* hence it appears, that the *old lady*, who wandered from the *mystic vale in Cornwall*, to the regions of *Snowdon*, imported a mixture of *Arkite* and *Sabian* idolatry.

But let us come to the last deposit of the mystical *sow*, namely, the *kitten*, which was *laid* under the *black stone*, that is, in a *cell*, or *Kistvaen*, in *Arvon*, from whence the mystagogue cast it into the *Menai*. It was taken up out of this strait, or river, and became the *Paluc cat* of *Mona*.

Isis, the Arkite goddess, was sometimes represented under the figure of a cat, because that animal, by the voluntary dilatation and contraction of the pupils of its eyes, imitates the phases of the *moon*, which was also a symbol of Isis: and Mr. Bryant thinks, that the very names of *Menai* and *Mona* have a pointed reference to the worship of the lunar Arkite goddess.

But *Paluc cat* is spoken of as a large and fierce creature, of the feline kind. Mr. *Owen* thinks it was a *tyger*. It is often mentioned, as one of the molestations of Mona; and as all the symbols imported by the mystical sow, were regarded as pernicious innovations, by those who adhered to the primitive religion of their country, the destroying of this *cat* was esteemed a meritorious act. Though it is described as an animal, it seems to have been only an *idol,* and attended by *foreign* ministers. Taliesin calls it *Cath Vraith,* the *spotted cat,* and thus denounces its fate—

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* Thus Mr. Owen, in his Dictionary, explains the word—"DRAIG, a "*generative principle*, or *procreator;* a fiery serpent; a *dragon;* the *supreme*. "*Dreigiau, silent lightnings*. In the mythology of the primitive world, the "serpent is universally the symbol of the *sun*, under various appellations, "but of the same import as the *Draig, Adon, Addon; Bel* and *Bâl* amongst the "Cymry."

Ys trabluddir y Gath Vraith
A'i hanghyvieithon*—

"The spotted cat shall be disturbed, together with her "*men of a foreign language.*"

It should seem, from another passage, to have been a symbol of the *sun:* for *Taliesin,* who often speaks in the person and character of that luminary, mentions as one of his transformations—

Bum Cath Benfrith ar driphren†

" I have been a *cat* with a spotted head, upon a tripod."

Upon the whole, we may suppose it to have been the figure of some animal of the cat kind, which was deemed sacred, either to the Helio-arkite god, or the Lunar-arkite goddess, or to both, as it was a *male* and a *female;*‡ and therefore, at all events, a symbol of the mixed superstition.

But as Coll, the guardian of the old lady, learned his mystic lore from the *red giant,* who resided in a nook of *Cornwall,* a region which had early intercourse with strangers, particularly with the *Phœnician,* or *red nation;* as the Britons had been jealous of the *mystical sow,* or *sacred ship,* which introduced the symbols here enumerated; and as the *wolf,* the *eagle,* and the *cat* are mentioned with disapprobation, as things which proved injurious to those who received them, I conclude that these symbols, and the idolatry which they implied, were of *foreign growth,* and did not pertain to the religion of the *primitive* British nation.

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* W. Archaiol. p. 73.

† Ibid. p. 44.

‡ Cath *Vraith,* and Cath Ben *Vrith.*

Having now dismissed *Coll* and his *old lady,* I proceed to consider the history of the third *mighty swineherd,* who is better known to the reader of English romance by the name of *Sir Tristram.*

" The third swineherd was *Trystan, proclaimer,* the son
" of *Tallwch,* the *overwhelming,* who kept the swine of
" *March,* the *horse,* the son of *Meirchiawn,* the *horses of*
" *justice,* whilst the swineherd was carrying a message to
" *Essyllt, spectacle,* to appoint an assignation with her.

" In the mean time, *Arthur, March, Cai,* and *Bedwyr,*
" went forth against him upon a depredatory expedition.
" But they failed in their design of procuring as much as
" a single *pig,* either by donation, by purchase, by strata-
" gem, by force, or by stealth.

" These were called the mighty swineherds, because nei-
" ther stratagem nor force could extort from them one of
" the swine which were under their care, and which they

" restored, together with the full increase of the herd, to " their right owners."*

This story also describes the meddling with some *foreign* mysteries, which had been introduced into Cornwall; and from thence extended into other districts: but these mysteries were regarded as *unlawful* and *depraved;* for the intercourse of Trystan with his mistress, *Essyllt,* was both adulterous and incestuous. As I have hinted above, it seems to allude to the incorporation of the primitive religion of the Britons with the rites of the *Phœnician sow.*

By the character of *Trystan,* we are to understand, as his name imports, a *herald* of mysteries: and hence a representative of the mystical system, which prevailed at a certain period, or in a certain state of the British hierarchy.

The memorials of this character in the mythological Triads, are many and various.

We are told, that of the three heralds of the island of Britain, the first was *Greidiawl,* the *ardent,* or, as he is otherwise called, *Gwgon Gwron,* the *severely energetic,* herald of *Envael,* the *acquisition of life,* the son of *Adran, second distribution.* The second herald was *Gwair Gwrhydvawr, renovation of great energy:* and the third was *Trystan,* the *proclaimer,* the son of *Tallwch,* the *overwhelming*—that is, the deluge. And it is added, that such was the privilege of these heralds, that none could resist their authority in the island of Britain, without becoming outlaws.†

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* W. Archaiol. V. II. p. 6, 20, 72, 77.

† Ibid. p. 5, 63, 77.

The very names and connexions of these heralds declare, that each of their *modes* was *Arkite,* or referable to the history of the deluge, whatever they may have included besides: and their authority is precisely the same which Cæsar assigns to the Druidical chair.

We have, in the next place, some intimation of the dignity with which these characters supported their high office, when we are told, that of the three *diademed chiefs* of the island of Britain, the first was *Huail, vicegerent of Hu,* the son of *Caw,* the *inclosure,* also called *Gwair, renovation,* the son of *Gwestyl,* the *great tempest.* The second was *Cai, association,* the son of *Cynyn Cov,* the *origin of memorial,* surnamed *Cainvarvog,* or *with the splendid beard:* and the third was *Trystan,* the son of Tallwch. And *Bedwyr, Phallus,* the son of *Pedrog,* the *quadrangle,* wore his diadem, as presiding over the three.*

After this, we are informed of the constancy and resolution with which the authority and dignity of these characters were asserted. For *Eiddilic Corr,* the same as *Coll; Gwair* and *Trystan,* were the three determined personages, whom no one could divert from their purpose.†

Trystan is again introduced as hierophant; for the three knights, who had the conducting of mysteries in the court of the mythological Arthur, were *Menu,* son of *Teirgwaedd,* or the *three loud calls, Trystan,* the son of *Tallwch,* and *Cai,* the son of *Cynyn,* with the splendid beard.‡

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* W. Archaiol. V. II. p. 5, 12.

† Ibid. p. 19, 69.

‡ Ibid. p. 80.

From these particulars it may be collected, that Trystan is a personification of the great moving power, in the religious establishment of the Britons, during a certain period of their history: and hence it may be inferred, that his amorous intercourse with Essyllt, *spectacle,* the *wife,* otherwise called the *daughter,* of *March, horse,* the son of *Meirchiawn,* his uncle,* is to be understood in a mystical sense.

We also read of *Trystan,* the *son* of this *March,* who seems to be the same personage, and is ranked with *Rhyhawt eil Morgant,* the son of *Adras,* and *Dalldav, mystagogue,* the son of *Cynin Cov, principle of memorial,* as a compeer in the court of the mythological Arthur.†

Such being the mystical character of Trystan, let us now look for the owner of the herd which he superintended, and the husband or father of Essyllt, his beautiful paramour.

This personage was a prince of some part of Cornwall; and his singular name *Horse,* the son of the *horses of justice,* must undoubtedly be referred to the *Hippos,* or *horse* of the ancient mythologists, which Mr. Bryant proves to have meant the *ark.* He imputes the name, as usual, to an error of the Greeks: but it is strange, that these *errors* should be constantly and accurately translated into the language of our British forefathers.

But let us hear our learned author.

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* W. Archaiol. p. 13, 73.

† Ibid. p. 19s 74, 80.

" I cannot help surmising, that the *horse* of Neptune
" was a mistaken emblem; and that the ancients, in the
" original history, did not refer to that animal. What the
" Ἱππος alluded to in the early mythology, was certainly a
" *float*, or *ship*; the same as the Ceto (the ark): for, in
" the first place, the Ceto was denominated Hippos:
" Ἱππον, τον μεγαν θαλαςςιον ιχθυν, *i. e.* the Ceto, or whale. Se-
" condly, it is remarkable, that the Hippos was certainly
" called Σκαφιος και ςκυφιος.* I therefore cannot help think-
" ing, that the supposed horse of Neptune, as it has so
" manifest a relation to the *Ceto* and the *Scyphus*, must
" have been an emblem of the like purport; and that it
" had, originally, a reference to the same history, to which
" the Scyphus and Ceto related (that is, the *ark*). The
" fable of the horse certainly arose from a *misprision of*
" *terms*, though the mistake be as old as Homer. The
" goddess *Hippa* is the same as *Hippos*, and relates to the
" same history. There were many symbols of an horse.
" The history of *Pegasus*, the winged horse, is probably
" of the same purport. So does Palæphatus, a judicious
" writer, interpret it—Ὁνομα δ' ην τω πλοιω, Πηγαςος. This Hip-
" pos was, in consequence, said to have been the offspring
" of *Poseidon* and *Da-mater*."†

The *March*, or *horse* of the British mythologists, must evidently be referred to the same Arkite history, which is here intimated by Mr. Bryant: and not only so, but also, as I shall prove in the course of this section, the horse was, amongst our ancestors, a favourite symbol of a sacred ship.

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* Schol. in Lycoph. V. 766.

† Analysis, V. II. p. 408.

The mystical Prince of Cornwall is styled the son of the *horses of justice;* probably, with allusion to the *just* patriarch: and, in order the more forcibly to mark his character, he is represented as a *master of ships,* and, in this capacity, classed with *Gwenwynwyn, thrice fair,* the son of Nâv, the *lord,* a title of the Diluvian patriarch; and with *Geraint ab Erbin, vessel of the high chiefs.**

And as *March* was a mystical character, we must also search the *Bardic* pedigree for the lady, whether his wife or his daughter, of whom Trystan was so greatly enamoured.

We are told, that the three *unchaste* matrons, of Druidical mystery, were daughters of one father, namely, *Cul Vanawyd Prydain,* which implies, *the person occupying the narrow spot, in the waters of Britain.* This very title has an aspect to *Arkite mystery.* The Diluvian god, or sacred bull, had his residence in such a spot.†

The first of these three sisters was *Essyllt, spectacle,* surnamed *Vyngwen,* or *with the white mane,* the concubine of *Trystan,* the *herald,* the son of *Tallwch,* the *deluge.*

The second was *Penarwen,* the lady with *the splendid head,* the wife of Owen, the son of Urien.‡

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* W. Archaiol. V. II. p. 5, 13, 68.
There was a prince called *Geraint ab Erbin,* in the beginning of the sixth century: but the name itself is borrowed from mythology, and the Geraint of the Welsh tales is a mystical character.—
See Ed. Llwyd's Archæol. p. 265.

† See the second section of this Essay.

‡ The character assigned to this prince in the Welsh tales is mythological.

The third sister was Bûn, the *maid* Κορη, the *wife* of the flame-bearer.*

It is pretty clear, that these three daughters of *Manawyd*, refer to three mystical modes of the same origin, and all Arkite: and I think, the reason why they are described as *unchaste*, was, either because they were communicated to persons of different nations, or because they included some foreign and adulterated rites, which had not been acknowledged by the more simple religion of the primitive Bards.

Our present business is only with *Essyllt*, whose name *Spectacle, or subject of steady contemplation*, manifestly implies some mystical exhibition. And as she was the wife of the *horse*, so she is described as having a *white mane*. She was, therefore, a mare; but the aspirant, Taliesin, saw the British Ceres in the form of a *proud and wanton mare;* Mr. Bryant also acknowledges *Hippa*, the *mare*, as one of the most ancient goddesses of the gentile world, and particularly informs us, that the Arkite Ceres was distinguished by that title, and that even her priestesses were called *Hippai, mares*.†

He seems to have occupied a distinguished place in the mystical drama.—See the story told of him and the *lady of the fountain*.

In the red book of Jesus College, Oxford, it is mentioned by Ed. Llwyd. Archæol. p. 265.

* W. Archaiol. V. II. p. 14. 73.

Ida, the Northumbrian King, is supposed to be described, under the name of Flamebearer. If such be the meaning of the term in this passage, I should conceive that *Bun* may allude to the mysteries of *Isis*, which Tacitus remarked amongst the ancient Germans, and which this pagan prince may have celebrated in Britain.

† Analysis, V. II. p. 27, &c.

Hence we perceive, that it was of this goddess and her sacred rites, that our British Herald and Mystagogue was so deeply enamoured: and that the *herd,* which he superintended, consisted of her *priests and votaries.*

Here it may be remarked, that the character of Trystan seems to refer to a period somewhat more recent than that of *Coll:* for the former was entrusted with the care of the mystical sow, *before* she had *farrowed,* or *produced vataries* upon British ground: but here, the pigs are already *produced* and multiplied, though they are still objects of persecution, to the mystical Arthur and his heroes, or the hierarchy of the native Britons. It may also deserve notice, that *Coll* is uniformly described as a *foreigner,* who introduced something into Britain, but Trystan was a native, and of some mystical eminence, before he tampered with the swine, or the consort of the Cornish horse.

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The notices which the triads have preserved, upon the subject of the celebrated Trystan, are undoubtedly, abstracts of some old mystical tales, which were current amongst the early Britons. And although the tales which more immediately regarded the character now before us, have disappeared in the Welsh language, it is evident that they must have existed, and that they formed the basis of certain romantic histories, of the famous knight, *Sir Tristram,* which are still extant in French and English.

Of these, the Metrical Romance, written by *Thomas,* of *Ercildoune,* and lately published by Mr. Scott, from the

Auchinleck MS. is worthy of special notice, as having preserved much genuine British mythology, though blended with the fanciful embellishments of the thirteenth century. I shall, therefore, remark a few particulars of the story.

This author changes the name of *Trystan,* the *proclaimer,* into *Tristrem,* and *Trem Trist,* which in the Welsh language implies a *woeful countenance;* a designation too whimsical to have escaped the notice of the humourous Cervantes, who probably had seen this romance in French or Spanish.

The father of Sir Tristrem is here called *Rouland,* which seems to be a mere French translation of his British name *Tallwch,* and the Irish *Tuileach,* a *rolling* or *overwhelming flood.*

His mother is *Blanche Flour,* the *white flower,* the sister of King *Mark,* who is the *March* or *horse* of the Triads. This lady is certainly the lovely *Flûr* of British mythology, of whom the illustrious *Cassivellaunus* was so deeply enamoured, that he undertook an expedition into Gaul, attended by the gods of Britain, in order to redress her wrongs; and by this act, provoked the resentment of Julius Cæsar.[*]

The character of Flûr imports that token, or pledge of union, amongst the professors of Druidism which induced the Britons to assist their brethern of Gaul, as related by Cæsar, and thus furnished that great commander with a pretext for the invasion of this Island.

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[*] W. Archaiol. V. II. p. 3. 10. 13. 60.
Caswallon, the son of *Beli* was attended by *Gwenwynwyn, thrice fair,* and Gwanar, the *ruler,* who were sons of *Lli-aws, impeller of the waves,* son of *Nwyvre,* the *firmament,* by Arianrhod, *goddess of the silver wheel* (the Iris) daughter of *Beli,* the *sun.*

The emblematical *Flûr* or *flower*, which this fraternity exhibited, was, I imagine, that of the white *trefoil* or shamrock. This was a sacred plant amongst the Bards,[*] displaying the mysterious *three in one*, the great secret inculcated by the very form of their *Triads* and *Tribanau.* Hence we are told, that wherever their goddess *Olwen,* the great mother, trod upon the ground, four white trefoils immediately sprung up.[†]

Flûr is the daughter of *Mygnach,* a mystical character, the son of *Mydnaw,* the *mover of the ship.* In a dialogue which he holds with Taliesin, he comes forward like *Arawn,* the king of the deep, with his white dogs, or ministering Druids; his residence is in Caer Sëon, in the mystic island, and the chief of the Bards reveres his *Gorsedd* or *throne.*[‡]

By the birth of Sir Tristrem, from the *rolling flood,* and the *symbol of union,* the original narrator seems to have implied, that he was a legitimate son of the *Arkite* religion.

After the untimely death of these, his natural parents, our young hero is committed to the care of a prince, named *Rohand,* who is a mortal enemy of Duke *Morgan, son of the sea,* a neighbouring potentate. Both these personages are found in the Triads; but with characters somewhat differently drawn. *Morgan,* sur-named *Mwynvawr,* or *most courteous,* the son of *Adras* (Adraste?) was one of the royal knights in the court of the mythological Arthur.* And the Rohand of the tale, is *Rhyhawd,* the *man of excess,* styled *Eil Morgant,* the *successor of Morgant;* and this character, as his name implies, carried his mytical lore beyond legitimate bounds. The triads rank him with *Dalldav, Mystagogue* and *March,* the horse, as a compeer, in the court of the same Arthur.

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[*] See the poem called the *Chair of Taliesin.*
Every leaf of this plant is naturally impressed with a pale figure of a *crescent,* which was also a sacred symbol amongst the Druids, and other heathens.

[†] Owen's Cam. Biog. V. *Olwen.*
From *Maill,* the name of this plant, we may derive *Cy-vaill,* an associate—one who mutually exhibits the *Maill.*

[‡] Appendix, No. 8.

He is also styled *Overvardd,* or one who corrupted the Bardic system with a mixture of foreign fable. This is the delineation of a *Hierophant,* who made some innovation in the Druidical mode.

This Rohand, anxious for the safety of his charge, directed his wife to feign a second delivery, adopted the infant as his son, and called him by the inverted name of *Trem Trist.* He took the greatest care of his education, and had him instructed in all the fashionable arts and sciences, amongst which, the mysteries of hunting are eminently discriminated.

Under this allegory, which is precisely in the style of the British tales, we have the history of Tristrem's initiation into the mongrel rites of Rhyhawd.—Thus the aspirant, Taliesin, was *born again* of Ceridwen, and instructed in her mystical hall; and thus the celebration of mysteries is

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* W. Archaiol. V. II. p. 74. Triad, 118.

represented in the story of Pwyll, under the image of hunting: but the new lore, communicated to Tristrem, differed from that of his parents, therefore his name was *inverted.*

We are afterwards told of a *strange ship,* which appeared upon the coast of Cornwall. The English translator, a rhymer of the thirteenth century, naturally calls it *Norwegian,* but as the story is mythological, the ship must have belonged to a people who visited Cornwall, during the early ages of mythology. This vessel was freighted with *hawks,* which Tristrem won at chess, and distributed amongst his friends. Here it may be remarked, that no ship ever sailed with such a cargo; but the British Ceres transformed herself into a hawk;* and this bird was a sacred symbol in Eastern mythology. It occurs frequently in Egyptian sculpture, as the favourite representative of Isis.

Tristrem is now conducted to the court of Cornwall, and by means of a *ring,* the *glain,* or insigne of a *Druid,* which he had received of his *mother,* is recognized as the nephew of *March, knighted,* or admitted to the dignities of the Bardic order; and advanced to the command of an army, or made *high priest,* having fifteen attendant knights assigned to him, *all of them bearing boar's heads.*—The meaning of this allegory is evidently the same as that of the Triads, which represent him as a *great swine herd.*

Invested with this power, Sir Tristrem sallies forth, to attack Duke Morgan, the president of the older system of Druidism; kills his adversary, and confers his conquered dominions upon Rohand, or *Rhyhawd,* the corrupter of

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* *Hanes Taliesin.*

Bardic mystery. Hence the Triads represent Rhyhawd as *Eil Morgan,* or *successor* of *Morgan.*

We next hear of our hero's combat with a champion of Ireland, whom he kills in the field: but at the same time, he is pierced with a poisonous weapon. The wound proving incurable, renders his person so disgusting, that he withdraws from society. In mere despair he goes on board a ship, which he commits to the mercy of the wind and waves; but such is his good fortune, that after tossing about for some time, he finds himself safe arrived in the port of Dublin. Here again, I suspect the rhymer has modernized the geography of his tale. The Queen of the country, however, being admirably skilled in medicine, heals the wound of our hero. He is called to court.

The king's daughter, the beautiful *Ysonde,* the *Essyllt,* or *Spectacle* of the Triads, is committed to his care as a pupil, and instructed in music and poetry, and in every becoming branch of his mystic lore.

Upon his return to Cornwall, Sir Tristrem reports the beauty and accomplishments of his fair pupil to King *Mark,* who conceives a violent passion for the princess, and commissions his nephew to return to Ireland in his name, and demand her in marriage.

Through a series of romantic adventures, the hero of Cornwall arrives at the accomplishment of his commission. The princess is entrusted to his care; and they set sail.

At their departure, the queen mother, anxious to secure the happiness of the married couple, prepared and delivered to *Brengwain,* Ysonde's favourite damsel, a *drink of might,* with directions, that it should be divided between the bride and bride-groom, on the wedding evening. But fortune decided otherwise. During a contrary wind, when Tristrem was faint with heat and thirst from the fatigue of rowing, Ysonde called for some liquor to refresh him, and Brengwain, inadvertently brought the fatal *drink of might,* of which Tristrem and Ysonde having partaken, they inbibed the sudden and resistless passion, which death alone could overcome. Even a *dog,* named *Hodain,* who licked the cup after it was set down, felt its invincible power, and became their inseparable companion.

The *drink of might* which is here mentioned, must have been the Κυκεων, or mystical potion of Ceres, agreeing with the preparation of the sacred *cauldron of Ceridwen,* and with the *wine* and *bragget* of the Welsh Bards, which was administered to the aspirants upon their admission to the mysteries; and hence represented, as communicating all the benefits of initiation. *Brengwain* was certainly the *Bronwen,* or *Proserpine* of the Britons, whom *Brân,* the *Raven* had carried into Ireland, along with the mystical cauldron, and espoused to a sovereign of that country, distinguished by the remarkable name of *Math-olwch, form of worship.*

Hodain, corn shooting into the ear, is the attribute of Ceres, whose priests Taliesin styles *Hodigion, bearers of ears of corn.*

The *Hodain* of this tale seems to have been one of those priests, though he is described as a dog: for heathen priests were called Κυνες; the British Ceres transformed herself into a *bitch;* and in the tale of *Pwyll,* the priesthood are represented under the character of *white dogs.*

Ysonde, notwithstanding her intrigue with Sir Tristrem, becomes the Queen of Cornwall: but not long afterwards, an Irish nobleman, her old admirer, arrives at the court of Mark, in the disguise of a minstrel, obtains possession of her person, and conveys her into his ship. I apprehend the import of this incident to be, that the Belgæ, or other inhabitants of ancient Ireland, were initiated into the mystical rites which prevailed in Cornwall.

But Sir Tristrem recovers the fair Ysonde, and restores her to the king, taking care, however, to devise means of keeping up a private intercourse with her. One of the stratagems to which he had recourse for this purpose, is very remarkable. Being separated from his mistress, he contrived to correspond with her by means of *small bits of wood, on which were engraved secret characters,* and which were floated down a small stream, which ran through the orchard of Ysonde's country seat.

This is a clear allusion to the practice of *sortilege,* by which the Druids consulted their gods.

The *bits of wood* were the *Coelbreni, omen-sticks,* or *points of sprigs,* so often mentioned by the Bards; or the lots, cut into tallies out of the shoot of a *fruit-bearing* tree, and distinguished by mysterious characters, as Tacitus has accurately described them. As to the *orchard,* we may either interpret it the Druidical grove, in which those fruit-bearing trees must have been cultivated, or else we may restrain the meaning to the lots themselves, which were cut out of that grove. And it is observable, that the hierophant, Merddin the Caledonian, describes the whole circle of Druidical mysticism, under the allegory of an *orchard,* containing 147 *fruit-bearing trees,* which were *perfect tallies* with each other.

Sir Tristrem, after this, is made *high constable,* or, as the Triads express it, *Prîv Hûd, president of mystery:* and, as a privilege annexed to this office, sleeps in the queen's apartment. Here he takes some unwarrantable liberties; in consequence of which, he is banished the court of Cornwall, and retires into Wales, where he undertakes the defence of *Triamour,* king of the country, against the usurpations of the giant *Urgan,* whom he kills in single combat. Triamour bestows the sovereignty of Wales upon his protector, together with a little *dog,* which was spotted with *red, blue,* and *green;* but our hero immediately restores the crown to *Blanche Flour,* the king's daughter, and sends the dog as a present to Ysonde.

Triamour seems to be the *Triathmor* of the Irish, in which the *th* are not audible. And the title implies a *great king, hog, sow, wave,* or *hill:** so that it is a term of sufficient *mystical* latitude, to denote either the president of the Welsh Druids, the chief object of their superstition, or their elevated place of worship.

Urgan is, probably, the *Gwrgi* of the Triads, a mystical cannibal; that is, a priest, or an idol, who delighted in human sacrifices. And here it may be remarked, that the character of a mythological *giant*, for the most part, implies the idea of *impiety* or heterodoxy. Hence we find, that the *courteous knight* of one tale, is not unfrequently the *atrocious giant* of another. Such circumstances comply with the various opinions of the several narrators.

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* This ambiguity arises from a general principle, which discovers itself in every page of the Irish vocabulary; namely, the appropriating of the same term to every object which presents the same general idea; and the primary and abstract meaning of *Triath* happens to be, *bulkiness, eminence,* or *prominence.*

Tristrem's obtaining and immediately resigning the sovereignty of Wales, may imply, that his system was introduced into that country, but not established there. And it is observable, that the daughter of Triamour, as well as the mother of the Cornish champion, was named *Blanche Flour*, that is, the white trefoil, or shamrock, the mystical pledge of union.

The little *dog* was a *priest;* and his spots of *red, blue,* and *green,* seem to import those insignia, called *Gleiniau,* which were of the colours here specified.

" These *Gemmæ Anguinæ* are small glass amulets, com-
" monly about as wide as our finger-rings, but much
" thicker; of a *green* colour, usually, though some of them
" are *blue,* and others curiously waved with *blue, red,* and
" white." *

Mr. Owen says, they were worn by the different orders of Bards, each having his appropriate colour. The *blue* ones belonged to the presiding Bards, the *white* to the Druids, the *green* to the Ovates, and the *three colours blended,* to the disciples.† It should seem, then, that this party-coloured *dog* was either a *disciple,* or a *graduate,* in the *several orders.*

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* Gibson's Camden, Col. 815.

† Owen's Dict. V. *Glarn.*

Tristrem, upon his return to Cornwall, renews his intimacy with the queen; in consequence of which, they are both banished the court. The lovers retire into a *forest*, where they discover a *cavern*, that had been constructed in old time by the *giants*. Here they reside, and subsist upon the venison taken by their *mystical dogs*. The king having surprised them, when asleep, in this cavern, with a *drawn sword* between them, is persuaded of their innocency, and restores them both into favour.

This *forest* was the Druidical *grove*; the *cavern*, a *sacred cell*, which had been constructed by the *giants*, or professors of a different mode; the *dogs* were the priests; the *deer* their noviciates; and the *sword*, that weapon which was drawn against the irregular disciple, and religiously sheathed again in the solemn meetings of the Bards, upon the stone which covered the sacred cell.*

Our unfortunate hero again falling into disgrace, upon the score of his old offence, is obliged to fly. Having traversed several countries, he enters, at last, into the service of Florentin—some relation of *Flur*—Duke of Brittany, who had a daughter, named *Ysonde*, more chaste, and scarcely less beautiful than the beloved Queen of Cornwall. Tristrem marries this princess; but his *ring*, or *sacred amulet*, having reminded him of his former attachment, he treats his lovely bride with absolute neglect.

This Armorican *Ysonde*, *Essyllt*, or *spectacle*, presents a tradition of some more simple religious mysteries, which anciently prevailed in Gaul, but which did not satisfy the debauched taste of the Cornish *hierophant;* and the next incident gives us a hint of the particular defect which he found in it.

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* See Appendix, No. 3, and Owen's Dict. V. Cromlech.

As a nuptial present, Tristrem had received a tract of country immediately adjoining the territories of a ferocious *giant*, named *Beliagog:* but this was accompanied with a strict injunction from Florentin, that he should abstain from hunting—celebrating his mysteries—upon the lands of that monster, who was brother to *Morgan, Urgan,* and *Moraunt.* The champion of Cornwall, regardless of this injunction, hunts upon the lands of *Beliagog,* encounters the *giant* in person, disables him in combat, and makes him his vassal.

As *Beli* was a name of the *sun,* so I think *Beliagog* may imply, what would be expressed in Welsh, *Beli a gwg,* the *severe* or *frowning Beli;* the *Belenus* of the more recent Druids of Armorica, whom Ausonius expressly identifies with *Phœbus,* or *Apollo.* So that the *giant,* so greatly abhorred by the primitive hierophants of Brittany, though connected with the *Cornish* superstition, was the *solar divinity.* And it is observable throughout the Triads, and the mythological tales, that whenever the corruption of Druidism is described, there is always some allusion to the *solar worship,* or to those symbols by which it is implied. This superstition, indeed, appears in the works of the oldest Bards, which are now extant, incorporated with their Arkite mythology: but those who were more peculiarly devoted to it, had the opprobrious name of *Beirdd Beli*—the *Bards of Beli.*

When we recollect the Gaulish tradition of Cæsar's days —*That the discipline of Druidism, such as it then was, had* *been modelled in Britain and from thence brought over into Gaul,** we may deem the following incident worthy of note.

Tristrem ordered his new vassal, *Beliagog,* to build a *hall—(temple)*—in honour of *Ysonde* and *Brengwain*—the *Ceres* and *Proserpine* of *Cornwall.* The *giant* complied with this injunction, and built the hall *within his own castle,* to which he taught Tristrem a *secure* and *secret* approach. He also adorned this hall with *sculptures, exactly representing the whole history of his former life, with exact representations of Ysonde, Brengwain, Mark, Meriadok, his minister, Hodain, and Peticrewe, their mystical dogs.*

This, surely, as a mythological tablet, describes the introduction of a system of theology, and religious rites, out of Britain into Gaul; and this appears to have been a mixture of Arkite superstition, and Sabian idolatry.

In the chapter which I have just quoted from Cæsar, the historian adds the information, that in his days, those who wished to have a more accurate knowledge of Druidism, generally went into Britain for instruction.

This circumstance was not overlooked in the tale of Sir Tristrem. This knight gave his brother-in-law, Ganhardin, Prince of Brittany, such an interesting description of the Queen of Cornwall, that his curiosity was strongly excited. Being conducted by Tristrem to the marvellous castle of *Beliagog,* which he could scarcely approach without trembling, and having there viewed the portraits of *Ysonde* and *Brengwain,* he was so astonished with their beauty, that he staggered, and fell backward in a swoon. Upon his recovery, he felt a violent passion for the charms of Brengwain, Proserpine, whom he determined to see in person, without loss of time. Accordingly, the Gaulish prince embarks for this island, attended by the British hierophant. They arrive in Cornwall, meet *Ysonde* and Brengwain, in the *forest*, or *grove*, where the enamoured stranger is espoused to the latter.

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* De Bell. Gall. L. VI. c. 13.

The *Auchinleck* MS. being imperfect, breaks off in this place. The conclusion of the tale is supplied by the learned editor from some French fragments. But, if I may judge from British mythology, which certainly constitutes the basis of the history of Sir Tristrem, this part is less authentic than the work of *Thomas* the *Rhymer*.

The particulars which I have remarked in this story, have the genuine character of that traditional lore, which we find in the *Triads*, the *Mabinogion*, and several passages of the ancient Bards: and they discover one principal source of those romantic narratives, which, for a series of ages, constituted the favourite reading of Europe.

Such tales as the Mabinogion, it will be said, do not deserve to be ranked with sober history. This is freely acknowledged. They are only brought forward, to diffuse a faint ray over ages, where history refuses its light. In this sense, they may be useful. They contain traditions of remote times, when Druidism had many private, and some avowed friends: and they are found to coincide with the most authentic documents which we have upon the subject of British superstition, and with the researches of our best antiquaries.

Thus, under the representation of three *mighty swine-herds*, or *hierophants*, we have, first of all, an account of the earliest religion of our Celtic ancestors, concerning which any memorials have come to our times: and this appears to have consisted of a depraved copy of the patriarchal religion, with a strong abhorrence of Sabian idolatry.

Coll and his mystical sow, present the picture of a novel system, which was introduced into Cornwall, and from thence extended into Wales, and into other parts of Britain. This had a general correspondence with the former, in the memorials of *Arkite* superstition; but it also included an adoration of the heavenly bodies, and viewed the deified patriarch, as united with the sun.

The character of Trystan continues the history of a heterogeneous superstition, made up of the religion of the native Britons, incorporated with foreign innovation, extending over great part of Britain, and cultivated in Ireland, but chiefly centering in Cornwall, where it had gained the first establishment upon British ground, and from thence introduced into Gaul.

As the characters of the three great swine-herds, present a general view of the history and revolutions of Druidism, previous to the Roman conquest of Briton; it may not be amiss to consider a few traditions, relating to those events which affected the superstition of our ancestors, subsequent to that period.

The British documents, in which these traditions are involved, are, it must be confessed, like the former, sufficiently uncouth and obscure; but they are the best that we have, and I shall pass over them as slightly as possible.

That the Romans, during their profession of paganism, shewed but little countenance to the Celtic priesthood, may be inferred from the severe prohibition of their religious rites in Gaul, and from the conduct of Suetonius, towards the *Druids*, the *groves* and the *altars* of *Mona*. And it cannot be supposed, that this people, after they became Christian, could view the remains of British idolatry, with more favourable eyes.

The public sacrifices of the Druids, and their open profession of magic, were undoubtedly suppressed in those parts of the provinces, which were more immediately under the inspection of the government. But this operation of civil edicts, does not necessarily imply, the immediate eradication of an inveterate superstition from the minds of the people. From what we know of British infatuation, after the departure of the Romans, it is reasonable to conclude, that during their vassalage, our progenitors had kept fast hold of their ancient prejudices and customs. We are told, which is probably true, that in many corners of the island, the Romans permitted the natives to be governed partly by their own laws, and under princes of their own. In those *Asyla*, people thus disposed, and who spoke a language which was unintelligible to their political masters, would naturally preserve the memory of their sacred poems and traditional institutes: they would also continue to perform such of their mystical rites, as were less obnoxious to observation and public censure.

From the language of the Triads, and some ancient poems, there is reason to infer, that they carried their prejudices still further: that during the Roman government, there was a seminary of Druids some where in the North of Britain, or in an adjacent island; and probably beyond the limits of the empire, where the doctrine and discipline of heathenism were cultivated without controul: that those Druids persisted in sacrificing, even human victims: that certain devotees, from the Southern provinces, repaired to their solemn festivals: that upon the departure of the Romans, some abominable rites were brought back from the North into Mona, and into other parts of Wales; and that the Northern seminary was not finally suppressed till the close of the sixth century.

The notices upon which I ground this opinion, I now proceed to state.

Of the introduction of the Cornish mode of Druidism into Carnarvonshire, and from thence into North Britain, we have had a hint in the story of *Coll,* the great mystagogue, who is said to have presented *Brynach,* prince of the Northern Gwyddelians, with the Eaglet which was deposited by the mystical sow, and which, *in after times* became *very famous.*

The fame of this eagle and his progeny, is now to be recognized only in the history of *the two dusky birds of*

Gwenddoleu, which guarded his treasure, wearing a yoke of gold; and which were in the daily habit of consuming two persons for their dinner, and the like number for their supper.[*] Such is the language of the Triads: and if this does not imply the sacrificing of human victims, to some divinity, who acknowledged those birds for his symbols, or his attributes, I know not what to make of it.

Gwenddoleu, the master of those *consumers*, is described as a prince, who resided on the North of the Strath-Clwyd Britons; but contiguous to them. His destructive birds fell together with himself, by the hand of *Gall Power*, the son of *Dysg Yvedawg*, the *imbiber of learning*, who is represented as prince of *Deira* and *Bernicia.* This catastrophe happened in the battle of *Arderydd ag Eryddon*, the *high eagle, and the eagles*, a fanatical contest on account of a bird's nest,[†] which was decided in the year 593.[‡]

These birds which daily consumed their human victims—which were destroyed by the *power* of a prince, who had *imbided learning*, or embraced Christianity, and in the battle of *eagles*, are certainly to be understood in a mystical sense; and as the *eagle* was one of the symbols under which an object of Druidical superstition was represented, I presume that these birds of Gwenddoleu must have the same symbolical meaning, as the eaglet which was brought forth, by the mystical sow, or genius of the ark, and presented to a prince of the North Britons.

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[*] W. Archaiol. V. II. p. 9. 13, 65.

[†] W. Archaiol. V. II. p. 11, 65.

[‡] Cambrian Register, V. II. p. 313.
In this contest, another mystical canibal was destroyed—namely, *Gwrgi Garw lwyd—the hideous, grey, human dog.*

If this be admitted, it must at the same time be supposed, that Gwenddoleu himself was either a priest or a divinity in the superstitious establishment of those Britons.

Let us inquire a little into his character and connexions.

That there was a celebrated Northern prince in the sixth century, known by the name of Gwenddoleu, and litterally opposed to *Rhydderch*, in the battle of Arderydd, I will not take upon me to deny; but as it was a notorious practice of British priests, to assume some title of the God they worshipped; and as this name implies *of the luminous oblique courses,* I rather think it was an epithet for the *sun.* His priest, notwithstanding, may have taken a fancy to it.

Gwenddoleu was the son of Ceidio, *preservation,* the son of *Arthwys,* the *incloser,* the *Arkite,* the son of *Môr,* the *sea.* Amongst his uncles and brothers we have *Pabo, producer of life; Eleuver, the luminary; Cov; memory,* and *Nudd, mist.*—Those are mystical connections of the Helio-Arkite divinity.

If we look for *Nudd,* we shall find that he draws his pedigree somewhat differently, but from the same vocabulary of superstition.—He was the son of *Senyllt,* the *seneschal* or *mystagogue,* the son of *Cedig,* the *beneficent,* a title of the Arkite goddess, recognized by Taleisin.* And this Nudd had a son named *Drywon*, the *Druidical teacher*, whose retinue is celebrated for having voluntarily maintained the contest, in the open course of Arderydd, the scene of Gwenddoleu's overthrow.*

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* Appendix, No. 4.

The fidelity of Gwenddoleu's retinue is equally famous It is recorded of them, that they maintained the conflict for forty-six days after the death of their Lord, and till they had avenged his fall.†

Gwenddoleu was also one of the renowned bulls of the contest of mystery, classed with the *Primordial great one*, son of the *prior world, of former inhabitants;* and with *the parent*, son of the *primitive horse*, Hippos or sacred ship. He, therefore, personified the great Helio-Arkite god.

From these notices offered by the Triads, let us turn to Merddin, the Caledonian. This dignified priest informs us, that his *Lord Gwenddoleu* had presented, or privately exhibited to him, a hundred and forty-seven *apple-trees* of equal age, height, length, and size, which had sprung from the bosom of Mercy; were enveloped by one mystical veil, and were still left under the protection or *Olwen*, a mythological character, who must be identified with the Arkite goddess.—The fruit of these trees were precious things which *Gwenddoleu* freely bestowed.‡

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* W. Archaiol. V. II. p. 8. 12. 69.

† Ibid. p. 7. 16. 70. The poems of Merddin the *Caledonian*, afford ground of conjecture, that these *days* were *years*, during which, the votaries of Druidism persisted in their superstitious practices, after some severe laws had been promulgated against them.

‡ Merddin's Avallenau, 1, and 6.

Those trees, as I shall shew presently, were purely allegorical, and imported the various secrets of Druidism; consequently, Gwenddoleu, who had the peculiar privilege of exhibiting the mystical orchard, and disposing of its produce, must in some sense, have presided over the order of Druids. And thus much is implied, in the dialogue between *Gwyn* ab *Nudd*, the king of the deep, and *Gwyddnaw*, the great Heriophant, or representative of the patriarch, where Gwenddoleu is styled *Colovyn Cerddeu*—*the pillar of Bardic lore.*[*]

Putting these things together, and still recollecting the birds which wore a golden yoke, guarded the treasures of Gwenddoleu, and consumed four persons daily; I think we may conclude, that Gwenddoleu was the head of an eminent Druidical establishment in North Britain, which admitted of human sacrifices. And whether he is to be deemed a divinity, or an Arch-Druid, the representative of a divinity, his influence at one period must have been very extensive, as we may collect from the language of his votary and chosen priest, Merddin the Caledonian.

" I have seen Gwenddoleu, adorned with the precious
" gifts of princes, gathering his contributions *from every*
" *extremity of the land:* now, alas the red turf has covered
" the most gentle *chief of the Northern sovereigns.*"[†]

As this mystical *ruler of sovereigns,* who had received his offerings *from the remotest regions,* was Merddin's acknowledged lord, it may not be amiss to consider a few particulars of that Bard's character, both as drawn by certain ancient writers, who composed in his name, and as exhibited by himself in his genuine works.

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[*] W. Archaiol. p. 166.

[†] Hoianau 3.

To the English reader, I am aware, that the term *Bard,* suggests only the idea of a person of mean condition, who has distinguished himself by the composition of a few silly rhymes; and this idea is generally accurate, when it regards the *modern* Welsh Bards: but amongst the ancient Britons, the title was of eminent dignity and importance; it could be conferred only upon men of distinguished rank in society, and who filled a sacred office.

Thus, Merddin is styled *supreme judge of the North;* that is, of the regions beyond the little kingdom of Strath Clwyd; and the *Syw,* or *diviner* of *every* region:* and in virtue of this office, he was *Cerddglud Clyd Lliant, president* of *Bardic lore, about the waters of Clyde.*† He was companion of *Canawon Cynllaith,*‡ the *offspring of the goddess of slaughter,* whom Aneurin thus commemorates, in the songs of the Gododin.—" If, in the banquet of " mead and wine, the Saxons sacrificed to *slaughter,* the " mother of *spoliation;* the energetic Eidiol also honoured " her before the mount, in the presence of the god of " *victory,* the king who rises in light, and ascends the " sky."§

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* Cyvoesi 1.

† Ibid. 11.

‡ Ibid. 11. 47.

§ Song 22.

And this connexion between the British divinities of *slaughter* and *victory*, is marked in the character of Merddin, who is styled—*Allwedd byddin Bûdd Nêr*[*]—*the key*, or, *interpreter of the army of the god of victory.*

He was the brother of *Gwenddydd Wen, adlam Cerddeu*[†]—*the fair lady of the day, the refuge of Bardic lore*—a mythological character: and this lady addresses the venerable priest in the following terms:—" Arise from thy secret " place, and unfold the books of the *Awen* (Bardic muse, " a name of Ceres), the object of general dread, and the " speech of *Bun*, Proserpine, and the visions of sleep."[‡]

These are some of the qualifications of Merddin, as recorded by a *Northern*, but unknown Bard, who wrote in his name and character about the year 948.[§] He was a *supreme judge*, a *priest*, and a *prophet*—and he was conversant in the mysteries of the very same divinities, *Cynllaith*, *Bûdd*, *Awen*, and *Bûn*, which were revered at the great temple of *Stonehenge.*

His reputation as a prophet, has thrown a shade over the few remains of his genuine productions. It has suggested a hint for their interpolation, by more recent Bards, with political predictions, adapted to the circumstances of the times, or the views of parties. The mystical poem, called

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[*] Cyvoesi 69.

[†] Ibid. 133.

[‡] Ibid. 129.

[§] So his age is fixed by our great antiquary, Ed. Llwyd. See his Catalogue of British MSS.

Hoianau, certainly contains some specimens of this kind, which cannot be as old as the time of Merddin: yet, I think, the bulk of the piece is his genuine composition. At least, it is not the work of a Welshman; for much of its grammatical idiom, and several of its terms, are in the language of those Northern people, amongst whom, it is acknowledged that Merddin lived.*

In this piece, Merddin the Caledonian, like *Pryderi, Coll,* and *Trystan,* supports the character of a *swineherd,* or *mystagogue.* He had resided, with his herd, either in an *island,* or in some remote promontory, where, amongst other arts, he had practiced divination, by the flight and voices of sea-fowls. And it is from this locality of his residence, as I suppose, that he is called the son of *Morvryn,* the *mount in the sea.*

In this happy retreat, Merddin is exposed, as well as his mystical herd, to a severe persecution, conducted by a King of *Alclud*, who is styled *Rhydderch Hael, Rhwyviadur ffydd —Rhydderch the Liberal, the champion of the Christian faith.*

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* This fact will appear upon the examination of the very first line.

Oian a phorchellan, a pharchell dedwydd—which would be thus expressed in Welsh—

Edrych o barchellyn, o barchell dedwydd.

" Attend, thou little pig, thou initiated pig."

It must here be remarked, that we have no such word as *Oian:* it certainly comes from the Irish and Caledonian verb *Oigham,* or *Oighanam. I behold, I attend,* whence the imperative *Oighan,* pronounced *Oi'an, Behold! Attend!*

Again, *a,* in Irish and Erse, is a sign of the vocative case; but it is never so in Welsh: we write and pronounce *o.*

The initial *p* in *porchellan,* is here changed into *ph,* after the sign of the vocative, as in Ireland and the Highlands; whereas in Welsh, it would necessarily become a *b.* Thus, instead of the exclamation of the Irish Ossian—*A Phadruig, O Patrick,* a Welshman would express himself—" *O Badrig!*" and in all parallel cases, the variations of the initials are the same.

Porchell, in this poem, takes the Irish and Erse diminutive termination, *an,* which the Welsh express by *yn.* So that it is evident from these three first words, that the *Hoianau* is not Welsh; and that we had our copy from the country of *Merddin:* for had it come from Ireland, it would have differed still more than it does from our native idiom.

The flame kindled by this King of the Strath Clwyd Britons, communicates itself to the neighbouring princes, to a host of bishops and monks, and, in short, to all the professors of Christianity; and the *grunting chorus* is in danger of being roasted alive.

It is upon this occasion, that the terrified Druid rouses the attention of his pigs, and warns them to fly for their lives into some secret place in the Caledonian forest. His address is worthy of a swineherd, and of his audience. The reader may be amused with a short specimen or two.

" Attend, little pig—thou initiated pig! Burrow not with " thy snout on the top of the hill. Burrow in a secret " hiding place, amongst the forests—a place which has " not been noted by Rhydderch the Liberal, the champion " of the faith."

" Attend, little pig! it was necessary to depart—to avoid " the hunters of the water-dwellings (our insular abodes), if " they should attempt to seize us—lest the persecution " should come upon us, and we should be seen. If we " can but escape, we will not deplore our calamitous toil." *

If all this is to be understood in the literal sense, what ideas must we entertain of the Christian princes and bishops, who could condescend to persecute such a groveling herd!

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* Hoianau 1, 2.

But the *initiated* or *enlightened swine* were certainly allegorical: and the real objects of persecution are suggested in a little poem,* purporting to have been a dialogue between Merddin, and a person called *Ys Colan, The Colan.* Here our swineherd appears in the character of an insolent and contumacious pagan.

Merddin seeing a stranger approach his watery nook, with a black horse, and a black cap, and in dark attire, demands if his name was *Ys Colan.*

The stranger replies, that he really was *Ys Colan,* a *Scottish* or *Irish scholar,* who held the Bard in little esteem: and at the same time denounces the *vengeance of the king* upon those who should refuse to *plunge into the water,* or be *baptized.*

As the battle of Arderydd, or the æra of the persecution of the Bards, is dated in the year 593,† and as Merddin and his associates made a *precarious* stand for some years longer, I think it highly probable that *The Colan,* an *Irish scholar,* who introduced *Christianity* amongst the Druidical *herd* in Caledonia, and *enforced* the *necessity* of *baptism,* was no other than *Colomba,* the *priest* aud *abbot,* who came out of *Ireland* into Britain, in the year 605, to instruct the *Northern Picts* in the *Christian religion,* and received from his converts, the island of *Hu,* Iona, or I-Colm-Kil.‡

To this mission of the good abbot, Merddin seems to have made an obstinate resistance: for in the poem above mentioned, he complains of the penalties he had incurred, by having *burnt the church, obstructed* the establishment of a *school,* and *drowned* a *book,* with which he had been presented.

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* W Archaiol. p. 132.

† Cam. Reg. V. II, p. 613.

‡ Bede, L. III. c. 4. Gibson's Camden Col. 1244. 1462.

He then pleads the merit of having been confined for a whole year upon the *pole of a wear:* that is, having been initiated, like Taliesin, into the greater mysteries of the *wear* of *Gwyddnaw;* and upon this plea, he implores the Creator to forgive his offences.*

In the conclusion he acknowledges, that had he known how perceptibly the wind blew upon the points of the mystical sprigs, he would have desisted from an action which he had imprudently committed. As this is an illusion to the Bardic mode of writing, it may imply, that Merddin had either disclosed or written something in defence of his system, which, in the event, proved injurious to it. And the Bards have a tradition, that *Ys Colan* threw a heap of British books into the fire.

From these particulars, it is pretty evident that Merddin, the vassal of Gwenddoleu, has been viewed as the hierophant of a herd of *heathenish swine.*

Let us now consider the character of their great enemy, who instigated the neighbouring princes, together with the bishops and monks, to unite in the persecution of this infatuated race.

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* I follow the order of a MS. copy in my possession. The printed edition has transposed two stanzas.

Rhydderch the Liberal, the son of Tudwal of *Tud-Clyd,* or the *district of Clyde,* was King of the Strath Clwyd Britons, about the close of the sixth century; and his residence was at *Alclud,* or Dunbarton.* We have seen, that he is mentioned by Merddin as the champion of the Christian faith, and the determined persecutor of the mystagogue and his swine.

In the Cyvoesi, where Merddin is introduced as prophesying of those events which should take place, subsequent to the battle of Arderydd, in which Rhydderch slew the celebrated Gwenddoleu, we are further told—

Dyd Gwynnydd yn rhyd—Tawy,
Rhydderch Hael, dan ysbeid,
Gelyn Dinas Beirdd bro Glyd.

This passage is somewhat obscure, owing to the transposition of the sentences: but the meaning is this—

" Rhydderch the Liberal, the enemy of the community " of Bards, in the vale of Clyde, after an interval, will " put the *white-vested ones* into the ford of Tay."†

That is, when Rhydderch had routed the idolatrous Bards from his own dominions, and the neighbouring districts, they retired into the midst of the Caledonian forest, as related by Merddin. After some time, their retreat is discovered upon the bank of the Tay; and the pagan fugitives are still pursued, by the influence of Rhydderch. But as this "Liberal" prince puts the *white-vested ones,* or Druids, into the *ford,* and not into the deep parts of the river, we may conclude that his intention was to *baptize,* and not to *drown* them.

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* W. Archaiol. V. II. p. 11.

† *Tawy,* a principal river, that penetrates the centre of the Caledonian forest, must be the *Tay.*

Hence we may form a probable idea of what is meant, by the celebrated battle of *Ard-erydd ag Eryddon,* the *high eagle and the eagles,* in which this Christian prince slew Gwenddoleu, who was at the head of the Druidical superstition—in which the *imbiber of learning* slew his two mystical birds, which delighted in human sacrifices—in which that cannibal monster, *Gwrgi Garwlwyd, the hideous and grey human dog,* also fell; and in which the united champions of the Christian faith dispersed the adherents to the ancient superstition, amongst the rocks and caves of the Caledonian forest.

This battle seems to have been decided, not by the sword, but by *severe edicts,* by the *oratory of Christian ministers,* and the *zeal of reformers,* manifested in the demolition of idols and heathen temples, and in the punishment of the contumacious, or their expulsion from society.

* * *

I have now produced a chain of traditional notices, which imply, that the symbols of superstition found their way into the North, from Cornwall, and through Wales, in an age of general heathenism; and that the superstition which accompanied these symbols, flourished in the West of Scotland, till nearly the close of the sixth century.

It is farther intimated in a whimsical Triad, that the provincial Britons viewed this Northern hierarchy with great respect, and that they not only made pilgrimages to the feasts of the Caledonian priests, but also, that they re-imported some of their mystical furniture and rites into Wales, after the departure of the Romans. This Triad introduces certain sacred ships, under the character of *horses,* like the *Hippi* of Greek mythology. The first article runs thus—

" Three *horses* carried the three loads of the island of " Britain. *The black horse of the seas,* the steed of *Heliodorus, the most courteous,* carried seven persons and a " half, from the mount of the flat stone of Heliodorus, in " the North, to the mount of the flat stone of Heliodorus, " in *Mona.*

" The seven persons were, *Heliodorus, the most courteous;* " *Eurgain, golden splendour,* his wife, the daughter of " *Maelgwn,* the *beneficent chief;* and *Gwyn da Gyvoed—* " *white,* good to his contemporaries,* the master of his *dogs* " (his high priest); and *Gwyn da Reiniad, white, the good* " *darter;* and the monk of *Nawmon,* the *ship of the cow,* " his counsellor; and *Pedrylaw, four-handed,* his *butler;* " and *Arianvagyl, silvercrook,* his servant. And the half " person was *Gel ben evyn, shoot* or *branch, with the shackled*

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* These *whites* were *Druids.*

" *head*, his cook, who swam with his hands upon the horse's " crupper, and his feet in the water."*

It is hoped the general reader will excuse the introduction of this *odd* paragraph, for the sake of the mythologist or antiquary, who may discover something curious in the several items. I shall only remark, that the steed which carried such a load of mysterious beings out of *Scotland into Mona*, and *by sea*, can only be considered as the representative of the *sacred ship of mythology*, which was the vehicle of the mystical *eight*.

This voyage took place in the interval, between the departure of the Romans in the fifth, and the general conversion of the Welsh about the close of the sixth, century: the story, therefore, involves an account of the re-conducting of some Druidical apparatus, with a suite of priests, out of Scotland into Wales. And the name of *Heliodorus*, the master of the group, has, probably, a reference to the *sun*, who was a distinguished object in the mysticism of *Coll*, the Cornish hierophant.

The Triad proceeds thus—

"The second load was that of *Cornan, having small* " *horns—crescent*—the horse of the sons *Eliver, with the* " *great retinue*, which carried *Gwrgi* and *Peredur*, and " *Dunawd Bwr*, the sons of *Pabo*, and *Cynvelyn Drwscyl*, " to see the sacred fire of Gwenddoleu, in Arderydd."

Here we have pilgrimages to the solemnities of the Northern Druids. This *Cornan*, or *Crescent*, was, I suppose, a mere symbol of the sacred ship; an insigne of the same import as the *Cwrwg Gwydrin*, or *boat of glass*, mentioned by Taliesin, as exhibited in the hand of the stranger, and procuring his admission to the nocturnal celebrities.*

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* W. Archaiol. V. II. p. 7, 20, 79.

The heroes, whom this Cornan introduced to the Northern solemnities, were near relations of Gwenddoleu, or members of his mystical society. *Eliver* and *Pabo* were brothers of Ceidio, Gwenddoleu's father, and grandsons of *Môr*, the *sea*.†

Gwrgi and Peredur, the sons of Pabo, were, at last, deserted by their party, and slain at *Caer Greu*, the *city of blood*,‡ or in the battle of Arderydd.§ Their story is full of mythology. *Gwrgi*, the human dog, surnamed *Garwlwyd, hideous and grey*, like the birds of his cousin Gwenddoleu, delighted in human sacrifices; and, like them, was slain by a son of the *imbiber of learning*.‖

The third mystical load recorded by our Triad, was that of *Erch*, or *Haid*,[*] the steed of *Gwrthmwl*, the sovereign, which carried *Gwair*, and *Clais*, and *Arthanawd*, upon an expedition against the cliff of *Maelawr*, in Cardigan, to avenge their father. It was a sacred law with Maelawr, not to close his port against any load that might arrive: in consequence of this, he was slain.[†]

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* Cadair Taliesin, in the third section of this Essay. See also Maurice's Indian Antiquities, V. VI. p. 190. Bryant's Analysis, V. II. p. 242.

In Montfaucon's Antiquities, V. II. fronting p. 276, is the figure of a bass relief, found at Autun, representing the Arch-Druid bearing his sceptre, and crowned with a garland of oak leaves, whilst another Druid approaches, and displays a crescent in his right hand.

† Eliver is sometimes called *Eleuver*, the *luminary* (W. Archaiol. V. II. p. 64). *Gwgawn Gwron*, the *severely energetic*, herald of mysteries, is sometimes represented as his son, and other times as his grandson. Ibid. p. 15 and 63.

‡ Ibid. p. 8, 16, 70.

§ Camb. Reg. V. II. p. 313.

‖ W. Archaiol. V, II, p. 9, 13, 65.

This *sea-horse*, or *ship*, called a *bee* in one dialect, and a *swarm* in another, must be referred to *Melissa*, and her Melissæ, or the *Arkite goddess* and her *priesthood*.

Gwrthmwl, the sovereign, was the priest of an idol, or *sacred ox*, called *Tarw Ellyll*, the *bull demon*:[‡] but this bull pertained to the *Arkite* deity.

His residence was at the *promontory*, or *insular mount* of *Rheonydd*, in the North, where he presided as chief elder, or high priest, of one of the regal tribes, under the mythological Arthur.[§] His castle was one of the principal palaces, or temples, of that patriarch;[‖] and, in a comparatively recent age of Christianity, it became the scite of an archiepiscopal church.[¶]

Rheonydd is, evidently, the same as Merddin's Caer *Rhëon* and *Rhyd Rhëon*, once the chief seat of his superstition, whence he was routed by *Ys Colan*, or St. Columba.

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[*] Irish, *Earc*, a *bee*: Welsh, *Haid*, a *swarm*.

[†] W. Archaiol. V. II. p. 7, 20, 79.

[‡] Ibid. p. 16, 17, 71.

[§] Ibid. p. 3, 68.

[‖] Ibid. p. 14, 73.

[¶] Ibid. p. 68.

Hence it may fairly be conjectured, that this celebrated spot, the great asylum of the Northern Druids, was the island of *Hu*, or Iona, which was occupied by the said Columba, and in after-ages contained the *metropolitan church* of all the Western islands. The early Christians did often erect their churches upon the ruins of heathen temples.

Mr. Bryant is positively of opinion, from the very names of *Columbkil* and Iöna, that this island was, anciently, sacred to the Arkite divinities. If I may be permitted to go upon similar grounds, I may remind the reader, that the Britons did worship the patriarch by the name of *Hu*; and that Taliesin expressly denominates *Mona*, the great sanctuary of Arkite superstition, *Ynys gwawd Hu, the island of the praise of* Hu; and hence I may infer, that Bede's island of *Hu*, at one period, constituted the centre of Northern Druidism.

From this place, the sons of Gwrthmwl, the sovereign, the master of the *bull demon*, proceed with their *horse*, or *sacred ship*, and land in South Wales, for the purpose of avenging their father, or reinstating him in those honours, which he had partly lost during the Roman government.

Amongst the heroes engaged in this expedition, I distinguish the name of *Gwair*, one of the titles of the Diluvian patriarch. This personage, and his associates, overcome their adversary, or the humbled and more timid superstition, which had hitherto lingered in the Southern provinces; and they succeeded in replanting some mystical rites in the territories of the Welsh, during the short period of British independence.

Thus, the history of the three mythological horses is referred to the tampering of our Cambrian progenitors with some heathenish superstitions, which had been cherished in the North, beyond the line of the Roman empire: and if I may depend upon our Welsh chronologers, for the æra of the characters here introduced, these transactions occurred after the departure of the Romans, and a considerable time before Rhydderch, with his princes, bishops, and monks, slew Gwenddoleu and his cannibal birds, or ruined the Northern establishment of the Druids.

* * *

Of the consequence of the *battle of Arderydd*, we have some account in the *Avallenau*, or *apple-trees*, a poem, which Mr. Turner has proved to be the genuine production of Merddin; and which contains the expiring groans of the Northern Druids.

However grievous Merddin's afflictions may have been, for the fall of his lord, Gwenddoleu, we find, that his own hand added greatly to their weight, by the undesigned slaughter of his own sister's* son, in the same fatal engagement.

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* That is, the son of *Gwenddydd*, the *lady* of the *day*.

It is difficult to ascertain the precise meaning of this *poetical* incident: but we may suppose in general, that the mystagogue, in the imprudent defence of his fraternity, committed some action which proved detrimental to its cause. We are told, however, that the effect of his error was a derangement of intellect, an abhorence of society, and a precipitate flight into the forest of Caledonia.

In this frantic mood, and after an interval of many years, he makes the rocks and caves resound, with the melody of his strain; in which his derangement appears to have been only assumed, for the purpose of repressing curiosity: for, though his descriptions are designedly obscure, they have too much method for real madness. It is the madness of a heathen prophet.

The ostensible purport of this poem is a tribute of gratitude for an *orchard,* containing a hundred and forty-seven delicious apple trees, which had been privately exhibited to the Bard, by his Lord Gwendoleu, and which he still carries with him in all his wanderings.

This circumstance, at once, points out the impropriety of understanding Merddin's orchard, in the literal sense, and leads us to some allegorical meaning.

Many particulars of this allegory may be interpreted from what has gone before in this essay; and it may be admitted as additional evidence, of two curious facts: namely, that the superstitious rites of Druidism were avowedly practiced, in certain corners of Britain, as late as the close of the sixth century; and that the Bards of that age, used all the means in their power, to conceal their secrets from the knowledge of the populace, to guard them from the persecution of Christian princes and ministers, and at the same time, to transmit them safe and unblemished, to future ages.

In support of this assertion, I shall produce abstracts from the several stanzas of the *Avallenau*, translated as literally as the darkness of the subject, and the faults of the copies, will permit: and to these, I shall add a few occasional remarks.

" To no one has been exhibited, at one hour of dawn,
" what was shewn to Merddin, before he became aged;
" namely, seven score and seven delicious apple trees, of
" equal age, height, length, and size, which sprung from
" the bosom of *Mercy*. One bending veil covers them
" over. They are guarded by one maid, with crisped locks:
" her name is *Olwedd*, with the luminous teeth."*

These trees are 147, which was a sacred number amongst the Britons, as we learn from Taliesin.†

They were exhibited at the *dawn*, the hour when the nocturnal celebration of mysteries was completed. The view of these trees, therefore, implies the complete initiation of the priest.

They were in every respect, perfect tallies with each other, and asserted to have been of divine origin. Hence we may gather, that one of the secrets communicated by these trees, was the Druidical art of *divining by lots:* and that Merddin's *Avallen Beren,* in this sense, corresponded with the *Arbor Frugifera* of Tacitus,* the *shoots* of which were cut into lots or *tallies,* distinguished by *energetic* marks, thrown into a white garment, or *covered with a veil,* and thus became the means of interpreting the will of heaven.

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* W. Archaiol. p. 150.

† *Anger Cyvyndawd.* Ibid. p. 34.
This is the square of 7, multiplied by the mystical 3. The round number 140 often occurs. This is the computed number of the stones, which completed the great temple upon Salisbury plain.

These trees still remained under their veil, and in the custody of the divine maid, *Olwedd* or *Olwen*—the British *Proserpine.*

But to proceed—

" The delicious apple tree, with blossoms of pure white,
" and wide spreading branches, produces sweet apples, *for*
" *those who can digest them.* And they *have always grown*
" *in the wood, which grows apart.* The nymph who appears
" and disappears, vaticinates—words which will come to
" pass, &c.

The Bard, having described his trees in the first *Stanza,* as *exactly similar to each other,* contents himself in the sequel, with mentioning one of them. The *white* blossoms seem to imply the *robe* of the Druid, the *spreading* branches, his *extentive authority,* the *fruit,* his *doctrine* and *hopes,*

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* This identity will appear more clearly in the sequel. If it be said, that Tacitus describes a *German,* and not a *Celtic* rite, I would reply, that the *Barditus* or *Bardism,* which the Germans near the Rhine, possessed, in the days of that historian, was probably a shread of the Celtic institute, which had been expelled from Gaul. I do not find that any such term as *Barditus* was familiar to the Germans of *Cæsar,* or to those of the *Edda.*

and the sequestered wood *which had always produced this fruit,* his *sacred grove.*

Most of the *Stanzas* conclude with a vaticination of some great event, which is here put into the mouth of *Chwibleian,* the nymph, or goddess, who is alternately visible and invisible, still meaning *Olwen* or *Proserpine,* who guarded the sacred trees, or presided over the mysteries.

In the third *Stanza,* Merddin tells us, that he had armed himself with sword and shield, and lodged in the Caledonian wood, guarding the trunk of the tree, in order to gratify *Bûn,* the *maid, Proserpine,* who, by way of acknowledgement, calls to him in the Northern dialect—*Oian a Phorchellan, attend little pig,* and bids him listen to the songs of the birds. The Bard complies, and learns the secrets of futurity.

Stanza 4. " The sweet apple tree has pure *white sprigs,* " which grow, as a *portion for food.* I had rather encounter the wrath of a sovereign, than permit rustics " in raven hue, to ascend its branches. The lady of commanding aspect is splendidly endowed; nor am I destitute " either of talents or of emulation."

The *white sprigs* could only have furnished *mental* food for the Bards, as constituting their *lots* and their *books.* The *men in black* seem to have been the *monks,* who strove to expose the secrets of Druidism, whilst Merddin, the fanatical devotee of the mystical goddess, was determined to guard them, at the hazard of his life.

Stanza 5. " The fair apple tree grows upon the border of

" the vale: its *yellow apples* and its *leaves*, are desirable ob-
" jects, and even I have been beloved by my *Gwnem*, and
" my *wolf*; but now my complexion is faded by long
" weeping; I am neglected by my former friends, and
" wander amongst spectres who know me not."

Thus pathetically does our mystagogue deplore his forlorn condition, after the ruin of his establishment. *Gwnem* seems to be a corruption of *Gwenyn, bees, priestesses,* which were deposited by the mystical sow; and especially as they are joined with the *wolf,* another of her productions.

" Thou sweet and beneficient tree! not scanty is the fruit
" with which thou art loaded; but upon thy account, I am
" terrified and anxious, lest the *wood-men should come,*
" *those profaners of the wood, to dig up thy root, and corrupt*
" *thy seed,* that not an apple may ever grow upon thee
" more."

" I am become a wild distracted object, no longer greeted
" by the brethren of my order, nor covered with my habit.
" Upon me Gwenddoleu freely bestowed these precious
" gifts; but he is, this day, as if he had never been."—
(*Stanza* 6.)

" The proper place of this delicate tree, is *within a shelter*
" *of great renown,* highly beneficent and beautiful; but
" princes devise false pretences, with lying, gluttonous, and
" vicious monks, and pert youngsters, rash in their de-
" signs—*these* are the aspiring men who will triumph in the
" course."—(*Stanza* 7.)

" Now, alas, the tree which *avoids rumour,* grows upon

" the confluence of streams, without the *raised circle*."*— (*Stanza* 8.)

In these passages, we perceive the Bard's great anxiety to preserve his mystical lore, from the effects of persecution, by *princes, monks,* and their *youthful agents,* who are employed in *poluting* and *cutting down* the *sacred groves,* and *demolishing* the *circular temples.*

" This sweet apple tree abounds with *small* shoots; but
" the multitude cannot taste its *yellow fruit.*"

" I have been associated with select men, to cultivate and
" cherish its trunk—and when *Dyvnant* shall be named
" the city of the *stones,* the Bard shall receive his per-
" quisite."—

" Incorruptible is the tree which grows in the spot, *set*
" *apart* (the sanctuary) under its wide envelope. For four
" hundred years may it remain in peace! But its root is
" oftener surrounded by the violating wolf, than by the
" youth who can enjoy its fruit."—

" This tree they would fain expose to public view: so
" the drops of water would fain wet the duck's feather."— (*Stanza* 9, 10, 11.)

Here the fanatical priest cherishes a hope, that his Druidism, and his temples, will be re-established in some future age, though he has at present, more persecutors than dis-

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[*] In another copy—" On the *brow of a rock, without a stone in its circle.*

ciples. In mentioning the 400 years, he seems to have a retrospect to the period of the Roman government, during which, his superstition had already weathered the storm of persecution, and therefore, as the Bard infers, it may survive another calamity of four centuries.

Stanza 13. " The fair tree grows in the *glade* of the " wood.—Its hiding place has no skilful protector from the " *chiefs of Rhydderch*, who trample on its roots, whilst the " multitude compass it round. The *energetic figures* are " viewed with grief and envy. The *Lady of the Day* loves " me not, nor will she greet me. I am hated by the *minister of Rhydderch's authority*—his son and his daughter " have I ruined. Death who removes all, why will he not " visit me! After the loss of *Gwenddolen*,* the *lady of the* " *white bow*, by no nymph am I respected. No soother " amuses my grief: by no mistress am I visited. Yet, in " the conflict of Arderydd, I wore the *gold collar*. Oh " that I were precious, this day, with those who have *the* " *hue of the swan*, (the white robed Druids !)"

Stanza 14. " The tree with delicate blossoms, grows " *in concealment* amongst the forests. A report is heard " at the dawn, that the minister has expressed his indignation *against the authority of the small sprigs* †, twice, " thrice, nay four times, in one day."—

Stanza 15. " The fair tree grows on the bank of a river.

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[*] Gwenddolen, was the mystical daughter of an ancient king of *Cornwall*. She may represent in general, the Cornish rites; but I think, more particularly, the *Lunar divinity*. Thus she answers to *Gwenddoleu*, who represented the sun.

[†] This surely alludes to the practice of divining by lots.

" A provost cannot thrive on the splendid fruit which I
" enjoyed from its trunk, whilst my reason was entire, in
" company with Bûn, the maid, elegantly pleasing, deli-
" cate and most beautiful. But now, for *fifty years, have*
" *my splendid treasures been outlawed,* whilst I have been
" wandering amongst ghosts and spectres, after having
" enjoyed abundant affluence, and the pleasant society of
" the tuneful tribe."

Stanza 16. " The sweet apple tree, with delicate blos-
" soms, grows upon the sod, amongst the trees: and the
" *half appearing maid predicts*—words which will come to
" pass!—*Mental design shall cover, as with a vessel, the*
" *green assemblies, from the princes, in the beginning of the*
" *tempestuous hour.—The Darter of Rays shall vanquish the*
" *profane man. Before the* CHILD OF THE SUN, *bold in his*
" *courses, Saxons shall be eradicated; Bards shall flourish.*"

This prophecy, which is put into the mouth of *Proserpine,* unequivocally charges the Bards of Merddin's order, with the abomination of *solar worship.* The *child of the Sun* must have been his priest, who, like Taliesin, assumed his title and character.—

" The blooming tree grows in Hidlock, in the Caledonian
" wood. The attempts to discover it, by its *seeds,* will be
" all in vain, till *Cadwaladyr, the supreme ruler of battle,*
" comes to the conference of Cadvaon, with the eagle of
" the *Towy,* and the *Teivi*—till ranks be formed of the
" white ones of the lofty mount, and the wearers of long
" hair be divided into the *gentle* and the *fierce.*"

" The sweet fruits of this tree are prisoners of words.—
" The ASS will arise, to remove men out of office; but this

"I know, *an eagle from the sky will play with his men,* "and bitter will be the sound of Ywein's arms.—A veil "covers the tree with green branches—and I will foretel "the harvest when the *green corn shall be cropped*—when "the *he* eagle and the *she* eagle shall arrive from France."[*] —(*Stanza* 17, 18, 19).

"The sweet apple tree is like the Bardic mount of assembly: the *dogs* of the wood will protect the *circle* of its "roots."—

"Sweet are its branches, budding luxuriant, shooting "forth *renowned scions*."—(*Stanza* 20, 21.)

Concluding Stanza. "The sweet apple tree, producing "the most delicious fruit, grows in concealment in the "Caledonian wood. In vain will it be sought upon the "bank of its stream, till Cadwaladyr comes to the conference of *Rhyd Rheon*, with *Kynan*, opposing the tumult of the Saxons. Then *Cymru* shall prevail. Her "chief shall be splendid. All shall have their just reward. "Britons shall rejoice. The horns of joy shall sound—the "song of peace and serenity."[†]

Such are the seemingly wild hints, which Merddin has thought proper to communicate upon the subject of his apple trees, and which, undoubtedly, were agreeable to the mystical lore of his order.

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[*] Merddin is foreboding the restoration of his Lord Gwenddoleu's *canibal eagles.*

[†] This triumphant close very much resembles that of *Cadair Taliesin, Cadair Ceridwen,* and several other mystical poems. This seems to have been the style of the Bards, at the completion of their diluvian mysteries, in commemoration of the returning season of serenity.

These trees, we find, were allegorical, and pointed to that mass of superstition, which the Bards of the sixth century had retained, and which they were desirous of *concealing, preserving,* and *transmitting safely* to posterity. The Christian princes and ministers, who diligently sought for the mystical orchard, for the avowed purpose of destroying it, root and branch, could have viewed it in no other light.

But though, under this type, the general system of Druidism may be represented; yet I am induced to conclude, from many circumstances which I need not recapitulate, that these trees, more particularly refer to the practice of sortilege, and have a marked connexion with the *Coelbreni, Omen sticks, lots* or *letters* of the Bards.*

As Merddin was the most recent character, deemed by his fraternity, to have possessed the gift of prophecy, his oracles were never superseded, during the long ages of superstition: but when new predictions were demanded for political purposes, the succeeding Bards thought it most expedient, either to interpolate the *Hoianau,*† or to make the prophet speak out of his grave.‡

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* That Merddin used them as means of divination, may be further inferred from hence; in most of the stanzas, a prediction of some great event is immediately subjoined to the contemplation of these mystical trees.

These predictions, of which I have inserted a specimen or two, are sometimes delivered by the Bard himself; at other times, they are put into the mouth of the guardian goddess, who has the property of alternately appearing and disappearing.

† W. Archaiol. p. 155.

‡ Ibid. p. 132.

The vaticinations of our ancient priest, are not much calculated to derive credit to his order, from the present age; but the absurdity of his pretentions was not peculiar to the Celtæ. Odin, as well as Merddin, was deemed a prophet, and *Partridge* and *Moore* were renowned *Gothic Seers*, of more recent days. Both in their nature, and in the fate which attended them, the predictions of our Caledonian Druid, seem to have resembled the celebrated *lots*, or *oracles* of *Musæus*, which are mentioned, and obliquely quoted by Herodotus. These were in such high credit amongst Greeks and Barbarians, that men of rank and talents thought them worth interpolating, for political purposes. But the Athenians deemed the crime worthy of banishment; and with good reason: the sacred predictions had an authority which could embolden foreign princes to invade their country.*

When we have once closed the poems of Merddin the Caledonian, we hear no more of the Druidism of the North. Of the countenance which this ancient superstition experienced amongst the Welsh, for some centuries longer; and of the documents which their poetry and traditions furnish upon the subject, I have endeavoured to give a fair and impartial account, in the present essay, which it is now time to bring to a conclusion. It is hoped, that the general view here presented, will not be deemed superfluous in a

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* See Herodot. L. VII. C. 6-

British library, and that the cause of true religion cannot be injured by this delineation of the gloomy mazes of error.

I shall take a brief retrospect of what I have written, and add a few general reflections.

I have shewn, that the Bards pretend to the preservation of the mystical lore of the Druids; and that a comparison of their works, with the documents of classical antiquity, confirms the authenticity of their pretentions.

From the barren, or desolated field of Bardic philosophy, I hastened to the consideration of religious doctrines and rites; and here I have shewn, that the superstition of the ancient Britons consisted of two principal branches, intimately blended together.

One of these was Mr. Bryant's *Arkite Theology*, which embraced some memorials of the history of the deluge, together with an idolatrous commemoration of Noah, of his family, and of his sacred ship.

The other was *Sabian idolatry*, or the worship of the host of heaven, a superstition, which in many other countries, has existed in conjunction with Arkite theology.

It has been remarked, that the Britons constantly interweave the memorials of the deluge, with their remotest traditions of the origin of the country and the nation:

whence arose an inference, that this was the superstition of the earliest settlers in Britain, and the degenerate offspring of the patriarchal religion, which our ancestors derived from the great stock of the Noachidæ.

On the contrary, it was shewn, that British tradition clearly discriminates, and steadily reports the worship of the sun and moon, as an innovation, which found its way into *Cornwall,* and from thence diffused itself into various parts of the British islands; and hence, I judged it a reasonable conjecture, that this alloy was derived from the tin merchants of Phœnicia, in whose country, a similar superstition confessedly prevailed.

From this analysis it appears, that the religion of the Britons differed from that of most heathen nations, only as a *variety* in the same *species:* that it presented no fundamental principle which can be accounted peculiar. Its two main branches, the *Arkite* and the *Sabian,* have been clearly traced, and in the same connexion, over great part of the ancient world.

This intimate, and almost universal combination of two systems, which have no obvious relation to each other, I cannot contemplate, without searching for some early cause of such connexion. Why should Noah be the sun? or why should the Arkite goddess be the moon? This is not the place for a new disquisition; but I may be allowed briefly to state a conjecture.

The righteous Noah and his family, who had been distinguished by a Supreme Providence, and miraculously preserved amidst a perishing world, must have been highly and justly reverenced, by their pious and obedient children, whilst living, their prayers were besought, and their precepts received, as the oracles of heaven.

After their death, their memory was revered, and a growing superstition may have begun to invoke these undoubted favourites of heaven, as mediators with the supreme being (just so the saints of the Roman church are invoked), and at last proceeded to worship them as gods.

The ark, also, was the means of preservation to the righteous. Its *figure* may have been consecrated, as a religious memorial of that preservation, till superstition began to view it as a pledge of safety, and to put it under the charge of an ideal being, who was worshipped as the universal mother.

Thus, the Arkite theology may have sprung from a corruption of the patriarchal religion; and in a manner which would not set the vain imaginations of man in immediate and open hostility with his fallible reason.

As to the incorporation of Sabian idolatry with this superstition, when I recollect, that amongst the heathen Britons, the sacred ship, or *ark*, the *zodiac* and the *circular temple*, had equally the name of *Caer Sidi*, I cannot help surmising, that the confusion arose from an abuse of the earliest post-diluvian astronomy.

Whether that science revived in Ararat or Chaldea, it was its evident design, to *commemorate the history and circumstances of the deluge, in the disposition of signs and constellations*. This device may have sprung from an innocent, or even laudable motive.

But from henceforth, the heavens represented those very scenes, with which Noah and his sons had been conversant. These canonized patriarchs were acknowledged to be immortal: for the age which *first* paid religious homage to the deceased, must of course have admitted the *immortality* of the soul, and the doctrine of *future rewards.*

The unbridled imagination of man no sooner contemplated the *sun, moon,* and *planets,* expatiating amongst the heavenly mansions of these immortals, than it also began to regard them as emblems of their persons, and of their sacred vessel; and therefore as mediators between the human race, and the unknown and *great Supreme.* Thus, the *Arkite* and the *Sabian* idolatry became one and the same.

This union seems not to have been coeval with the earliest *Arkite* superstition of the Noachidæ. Hence the traditions of the Greeks and other nations relative to the persecution of *Latona* and *her children,* of *Hercules, Bacchus,* and other characters which implied an adoration of the host of heaven. They were admitted, with reluctance, to the rank of gods. Mankind adopted the practice of Sabian idolatry, with an avowed consciousness, that they were departing from the principles of their forefathers.

That the heathen Britons felt this consciousness, we have had abundant proof. It may also be urged, from their own traditions and acknowledgements, that their *Arkite* superstition was a manifest corruption of better principles.

They had become so gross in their ideas, as to worship *Hu the Mighty,* or the patriarch, as a god. Yet they had not absolutely forgotten his true history. The Triads view him as a righteous man, and ascribe to him the actions of a man. Taliesin says of him and his family—"The just "ones toiled: on the sea which had no land, long did they "dwell: of their integrity it was, that they did not endure "the extremity of distress." *

If they were preserved *for their integrity,* it must have been by some superintending power: and this power is acknowledged by the same Bard, in his song upon Dylan, where we find, that "A sole supreme God, most wise un-"folder of secrets, most beneficent," had destroyed a profligate world, and preserved the righteous patriarch. And again: the *sovereign, the supreme ruler of the land, extended his dominion over the shores of the world,* or destroyed it by the deluge; but, at the same time, *preserved the inclosure of the righteous patriarch in perfect security.*†

So that the great Diluvian god, who was worshipped under the symbol of the bull and the dragon, and who was even identified with the luminary of the material heavens, is acknowledged to have been no other than a *saint of the most high.*

If such principles were admitted by heathens, when they came to the candid avowal of the truth, wherein did the great heinousness of heathenism, and its votaries, consist?

Not in an absolute ignorance of a great First Cause, and of his superintending Providence, but in giving *his* glory to another, and in acting against those better principles, which their own minds could not but acknowledge.

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* Appendix, No. 10.

† Appendix, No. 3.

"Because that which may be known of God, is manifest
"to them, for God hath shewed it unto them. For the
"invisible things of him, from the creation of the world, are
"clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made,
"even his eternal power and Godhead; *so that they are*
"*without excuse:* because that, when *they knew God,* they
"glorified him not, *as God,* neither were thankful; but
"became *vain in their imaginations,* and their foolish heart
"was darkened.

"Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools,
"and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an
"image, made like to corruptible *man,* and to *birds,* and
"*four-footed beasts,* and *creeping things*—who changed the
"truth of God into a lie, and *worshipped* and *served the*
"*creature, more than the Creator,* who is blessed for ever."*

Such is the view of this subject, communicated by a *true philosopher,* a *good antiquary,* and *no mean scholar.*

The human mind is prone to such woful lapses, when it gives way to vain imagination and self-conceit—to the *opinions* of *fallible,* or the *views* of *designing men.*

Thus, *Druidism* was removed but a few paces further from the *religion of Noah,* than *popery,* and some other modes of worship, denominated Christian, are departed from the *faith,* the *purity,* and the *simplicity of the gospel.* Wherefore it behoves all men, who build their hopes upon the religion of Christ, not to place an implicit confidence in the practice of a corrupt age, or in the principles of an arrogant and presumptuous teacher; but to have a constant eye to the foundation once laid by the apostles and prophets.

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* St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans, Chap. I.

Here another remark of some importance offers itself.

As Gentilism arose from a corruption of the patriarchal religion, it is reasonable to suppose, that amongst a multiplicity of errors and absurdities, it preserved some tincture of the venerable source from whence it sprung: in the same manner as popery is acknowledged still to possess some of the genuine forms and tenets of primitive Christianity; and a diligent comparison of heathen systems with the book of Job, and the first book of Moses, will evince that this was actually the case.

Whatever Gentilism had thus preserved without corruption, must be regarded as derived from the revelations vouchsafed to the patriarchs, and therefore, *in its origin*, of Divine authority, like those uncorrupted forms and tenets in popery, which are derived from the truth of the Gospel.

We are not, therefore, to conclude, *a priori*, that every form of sacrifice, every rite of purification, every sacred symbol, or even every fundamental doctrine, which may have prevailed amongst the ancient heathens, was of human device, and therefore could have nothing similar to it in the revealed will and ordinances of the Supreme Being. For this mode of argument would lead us to conclusions, as unjust as the cavils of those scrupulous persons, who assert, that the church of England must be superstitious, because it retains some of the forms of the church of *Rome*.

As this church has retained *some* of the institutes of true Christianity, so Gentilism had not lost *every institute* of the patriarchal religion: and these uncorrupted institutes are pure and sacred, notwithstanding the general corruption of the channels through which they have flowed.

Upon this ground, we may frame an answer to those adversaries of revelation, who having observed, that some *modes of sacrifice*, some *rites of purification*, some *sacred symbols*, and many other particulars, sanctioned in the writings of Moses and the prophets, have their parallel in the religion of *Egypt*, *Syria*, or *Chaldea*, boldly assert, that these things were adopted from the heathens, and, consequently, that the writings of the Old Testament, and the religion of the Jews, could not have been of Divine communication.

The answer is ready. As God had revealed his will, and instituted a form of worship, by the prophets of the primitive world, *Adam*, *Enoch*, and *Noah*, so, when the primitive religion was corrupted by the vanity and wickedness of mankind, he renewed this revelation to the Israelites by Moses, and the prophets of the Old Testament.

That Spirit, which has neither variableness nor shadow of turning, again inculcated to his chosen people the same expectation of the promised Redeemer, figured out by the same symbolical types, which had been communicated to the patriarchs. And as the Gentiles also had retained some *vestiges* of the true primitive religion, an occasional analogy between their forms and symbols, and those of the Israelites, was a consequence that necessarily followed.

As certain rites and symbols were enjoined to the Israelites, not because they were heathenish, but because they were patriarchal, and of divine institution, so they were not omitted, in consequence of the mere accident, that the Gentiles had retained them.

The word of God, that word, of which *every jot and tittle must be fulfilled*, never turns to the right hand, nor to the left—never gives way to the error, or the petulence of man.

From the general and unequivocal vestiges of *Arkite* mythology, which were impressed upon the heathen world, some other important inferences may be drawn.

As the united voice of the early ages, they forcibly recal the candid sceptic, if such there be, to the acknowledgment of the true, that is, the scriptural account of the deluge, and the consequent rejection of all those astronomical and geological fables, which plunge the origin of mankind into the abyss of unfathomable antiquity, and thus open the gap into the regions of darkness, and infidel delusion. Let reason only be consistent with itself, in exploring even the history of heathenism, and it must acknowledge the truth of our sacred oracles.

The general voice of mythology, to which I may now add that of the sequestered Briton, admits, that the personage who escaped in his bark from the great deluge, was distinguished from the mass of perishing mortals by a divine providence, and miraculously preserved, on account of his piety and righteousness.

This attestation to the character of the great patriarch, and from the mouth of heathenism itself, not only asserts the authenticity of his history, but also the truth of his religion, as a man whose faith and conduct were eminently approved by heaven. And this religion regarded man as morally responsible to one supreme and over-ruling God, who mercifully accepted the offerings and the persons of those who sincerely obeyed him, and pardoned their offences, through the merits of a Redeemer, announced to our first parents.

APPENDIX,

CONSISTING OF

ANCIENT POEMS AND EXTRACTS,

ILLUSTRATIVE OF THE

Subjects

DISCUSSED IN THE PRECEDING ESSAY.

TO WHICH ARE ADDED,

SOME REMARKS

UPON

ANCIENT BRITISH COINS.

THESE poems and extracts from the antient Bards, being illustrative of the several subjects discussed in the preceding Essay, are subjoined with the originals at large, for the satisfaction of the antiquarian reader.

No. I.

A Song of Taliesin, concerning the Sons of Llŷr.[*]

1.

Golychaf i Gulwydd, Arglwydd pob echen,
Arbennig torfoedd ynhyoedd am Ordden.
Ceint yn yspyddawd, uch gwirawd aflawen:
Ceint rhag meibion Llyr, yn ebyr Hen Felen.
Gweleis treis trydar ac afar ac anghen:
Yd lethrynt lafnawr ar bennawr disgywen

---

[*] W. Archaiol. p. 66. *Llyr* implies *the sea*, or the *sea-beach*. This name has a constant reference to the rites of the Diluvian god. It has been conferred upon his priests and eminent votaries. The sons of *Llyr* may denote, in general, those who had been initiated in the mysteries of the Druids.

Ceint rhag Udd Clodeu, yn noleu Hafren;
Rhag Brochwel Powys, a garwys fy awen.
Ceint yn addfwyn rodle, ym more, rhag Urien;
Yn ewydd am an traed gwaed ar ddïen.
Neud amug ynghadeir o beir Ceridwen!
Handid rydd fy nhafawd,
Yn addawd gwawd Ogyrwen.

I will adore the love-diffusing Lord* of every kindred, the sovereign of hosts and powers, round the universe.

There has been a battle † at the feast, over the joyless beverage—a battle against the sons of Llyr, at the outlets of Hên Velen.

I saw the oppression of tumult, and wrath, and tribulation, when the blades gleamed on the glittering helmets in battle, against the Lord of Fame, in the dales of the Severn—against Brochwel ‡ of Powys, who loved my muse.

There was a battle in the glorious course, before Urien,§ with the dawn: blood flowed in streams round our feet, when death prevailed.

Is not my chair protected by the cauldron of Ceridwen! ||

---

* The Bard speaks of *one supreme God,* as acknowledged by the ancient Druids, together with their subordinate divinities, *Ceridwen, Elphin,* &c. whose names occur in this poem.

† Of the three battles here mentioned, the first, namely, that against the sons of Llyr, or the Bards, at the *feast* seems to have been the same which took place in the *avenues* or outlets of Stonehenge, which is here called *Hên Velen,* the *old Belenium,* or temple of Apollo.—See the songs of the *Gododin.*

‡ Brochwel was prince of the country, about the dales of the Severn, in the sixth century. In his old age, he commanded the Britons in the memorable battle of Chester, A. D. 603.

§ Urien of Reged, a warlike prince of the sixth century. His fame is celebrated in many songs of Taliesin, and his death lamented by Llywarch Hên.

|| The cauldron, and the sanctuary of Ceridwen, have been considered, *Sect.* 3 and 4.

Therefore, let my tongue be free, in the sanctuary of the praise of the goddess.

2.

Gwawd Ogyrwen Uferen rwy ddigones
Arnunt, a llefrith a gwlith a mês.
Ystyriem yn llwyr, cyn clwyr cyffes,
Dyfod yn ddiheu angheu nês nês:
Ac am diredd Enlli dyvi dylles;
Dyrchawr llongawr ar glawr aches.
A galwn ar y gwr a'n digones,
A'n nothwy rhag gwyth llwyth anghes.
Pan alwer ynys Vọn tirion vaes,
Gwyn eu byd hwy gwleiddion Saeson artrês.

The praise of the goddess is a *mass*,* which has completely atoned for them, WITH NEW MILK, AND DEW, AND ACORNS.

Let us ponder deeply, before confession is heard, that death is evidently approaching nearer and nearer, and that for the lands of Bardsey,† there will be an inroad.—A fleet shall rise on the face of the water. Let us then call upon him whom we have found sufficient, that he may protect us from the wrath of the alien race.

When the Isle of Mona shall be called a pleasant field,‡ then happy the lot of the meek nation, whom the Saxons oppress.

---

* Or *oblation*, in behalf of the fallen warriors.

In this passage, we may remark the bigotry with which the Bards continued to honour the imaginary gods of their forefathers, notwithstanding they acknowledged the being of *one love-diffusing Lord of the universe*. Are there not nominal Chrrstians in the present day, chargeable with practices no less absurd or impious!

† It appears from several passages, that this spot, as well as Mona, was sacred to the ancient superstition.

‡ Thus Merddin, the Caledonian, in his *Avallennau*.—"When Dyvnant "shall be named the city of stones, the Bard shall receive his perquisite."

3.

Doddwyf Deganhwy i amryson
A Maelgwn, mwyaf ei achwyson:
Ellyngais fy Arglwydd, yngwydd Deon;
Elphin Pendefig, ri hodigion.
Yssid imi deir cadeir, cyweir, cysson;
Ac yd frawd parhawd gan Gerddorion.
Bûm ynghat Goddeu, gan Lleu a Gwydion,
Wy a rithwys gwydd elfydd ag elestron.
Bûm i gan Vrân yn Iwerddon.
Gweleis pan laddwyd morddwyd Tyllon.
Cigleu gyfarfod am gerddorion,
A Gwyddyl, diefyl diferogion.
O Benrhyn Vleth hyd Luch Rëon,
Cymry yn unfryd, gwrhyd wrion.

I came to Teganwy to maintain the contest with Maelgwn,[*] the greatest of delinquents: in the presence of Dëon[†] (the Distributor), I liberated my Lord, even *Elphin,*[‡] *the sovereign of those who carry ears of corn.*[§]

I have three presidencies, complete and concordant, and till the doom shall they remain with the *tuneful tribe.*[||] I was in the battle of *purposes* with Lleu and Gwydion,[¶] who set in order the elementary trees and plants.[*] I was with *Brân*[†] in Ireland. I saw when the thigh of Tyllon was cut. I heard the conference, respecting the Bards, with the Gwyddelian, polluted fiends.

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[*] The *Maglocunus* of Gildas—Lord of North Wales, from A. D. 517, to 546, and then nominal sovereign of the Britons, to the time of his death, about the year 560.

[†] A title of Hu, *Bacchus, or Liber Pater,* the Helio-arkite god. Thus Appendix, No. 11.
"O *Hu,* with the expanded wings—O father *Dëon!*"

[‡] See his character and connexions in the 3d Section.

[§] That is, the priests or votaries of Ceres.

[||] Or *masters of Bardic lore.*

[¶] *Lleu,* the *luminary,* was the father of *Minauc,* the Diluvian patriarch. *Gwydion* was the British *Hermes.* See the *Chair of Ceridwen,* in Sect. 3. By *setting in order the elementary trees,* is implied, *laying the first foundation of written memorials.*

From the promontory of Bleth[‡] to Lluch Rëon, the Cymry are of one mind, exercising fortitude.

4.

Gwaret dy Gymry ynghymelri!
Teir cenedl gwythlawn, o iawn deithi,
Gwyddyl, a Brython, a Rhomani,
A wahan dyhedd a dyvysgi:
Ac am derfyn Prydein, cein ei threfi,
Ceint rhag teyrnedd, uch medd lestri,
Yngheinion Dëon, i'm a'i dyroddi:
A'n dwy ben sywed Cêd ryferthi.
Ys cyweir fy nghadeir, ynghaer Sidi:
Nis plawdd haint a henaint a fo yndi.
Ys gwyr Manawyd a Phryderi,
Tair Orian, y am dan, a gan rhegddi;
Ac am ei banneu ffrydieu gweilgi,
A'r ffynawn ffrwythlawn yssydd odduchti,

---

[*] *Elestron*, more particularly, mean the *water lilies*, or *flags*—the *Lotos* of the Druids.

[†] *Bran ap Llyr, Raven, son of the sea*, was the traditional father of the celebrated Caractacus. He first introduced the mystical cauldron into Ireland, probably with a view to secure his mysteries from the persecutions of the invading Romans.—See Turner's Vindic. p. 283.

The name of this Diluvian priest is referable to the raven of Noah.

Our mystical Bard, like Pythagoras of old, pretends to have been present in the transactions of various ages. As he held in the doctrine of Metempsychosis, he blended his own personal character, with that of the *Taliesins*, or priests of the sun, who had gone before him.

[‡] Perhaps *Blatum* of the Itinerary—*Bulnis*, at the West end of the wall of Severus. *Lluch Rëon*, the chief seat of the Northern Druids.—See *Sect.* 5.

One of the great maxims of the Druids was—*Ανδρειαν ασκειν, to exercise fortitude.* Diog. Laert.

Ys whegach no'r gwin gwyn y llyn yndi—
Ac wedi ath iolaf, Oruchaf, cyn gweiyd,
Gorod cymmod a thi!

Deliver thou the Cymry, in the hour of tribulation! Three tribes, cruel from native disposition, the Gwyddelians, the Britons,[*] and the Romans, disturb *our* tranquillity with *their* tumults: and round the borders of Britain, with its fair dwellings, they contend for the sovereignty, over vessels of mead,[†] even in the pavilions of the *distributor, who bestowed it upon me.* The inundation will surround us, the chief priests of Kêd.

Yet complete is my chair in Caer Sidi,[‡] neither disorder nor age will oppress him that is within it. It is known to Manawyd and Pryderi, that three loud strains round the fire, will be sung before it, whilst the currents of the sea are round its borders, and the copious fountain is open from above, the liquor within it is sweeter than delicious wine.

And after I shall have worshipped thee, O thou *Most High*, before I am covered with the sod, may I be found in covenant with thee![§]

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[*] The *Brython*, when distinguished from the *Cymry*, or primitive inhabitants, seem to have been the *Belgian* tribes, whom the Triads place in the North, as well as the South of Britain.

[†] An allusion to the bloody feast, on the *Cursus*, at Stonehenge, where *Dëon*, or *Hu*, held his court. Taliesin, as chief Druid, and vicegerent of this god, and of *Kêd*, or Ceres, claims the sovereignty of the British Island. Had his religion been in full establishment, he would have been acknowledged as supreme judge, from whose decree there would have been no appeal. Merddin was styled *Supreme Judge of the North*, in the sixth century.

[‡] In this passage, our Bard borrows his imagery from Diluvian mythology, and represents his sanctuary as a type of the *ark*.

[§] This sentiment often occurs in the old Bards.—It seems to express some degree of dissatisfaction in their heathenish mummery, and to import a vow of becoming Christians, sometime before their death.—See the first stanza of the following poem.

No. II.

A Poem of Taliesin, called MIC DINBYCH, *a View of the Bardic Sanctuary.*[*]

1.

Archaf y wen i Dduw plwyf esgori.
Perchen nêv a llawr, pwyll fawr wofri,
Addfwyn Gaer y sydd, ar Glawr Gweilgi;
Bid llawen ynghalan eirian y ri:
Ac amser pan wna môr mawr wrhydri,
Ys gnawd gorun Beirdd uch medd lestri.
Dyddybydd gwaneg, ar frys, dybrys iddi,
A ddaw hwynt i werlas o glas Fichti:
Ac am bwyf, O Ddews, dros fy ngweddi,
Pan gattwyf ammod cymmod a thi!

I will address my prayer to God, that he would deliver our community.[†]—

O thou Proprietor of heaven and earth, to whom great wisdom is attributed, *a holy sanctuary* there is on the surface of the ocean: may its chief be joyful in the splendid festival, and at the time when the sea rises with expanding energy!

Frequently does the surge asail the Bards, over their vessels of mead: and on the day when the billows are excited, may this inclosure skim away, though the billows come beyond the green spot, from the region of the Picts.[‡]

And, O God! May I be, for the sake of my prayer, though I preserve my institute, in covenant with thee!

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[*] W. Archaiol. p. 67.

[†] The whole language of this Bardic prayer, is strongly tinctured with the Diluvian, or Arkite lore of the Druids.

[‡] The same Northern people with the *Brython*, mentioned in the preceding poem.

2.

Addfwyn Gaer y sydd, ar lydan lyn,
Dinas diachor, môr a'i cylchyn.
Gvgyvarch ti, Prydein, cwdd gyngein hyn?
Blaen llyn ab Erbin boed teu vöyn:
Bu gosgordd, a bu cerdd, yn eil mehyn,
Ac eryr, uch wybr, allwybr Granwyn,
Rhag Udd ffelig, nag esgar gychwyn,
Clod wasgar, a Gwanar ydd ymddullyn.

A holy sanctuary there is, on the wide lake; a city not protected with walls; the sea surrounds it. Demandest thou, O Britain, to what this can be meetly applied! Before the lake of the son of Erbin, let thy ox be stationed*—there, where there has been a retinue, and in the second place, a procession, and an eagle aloft in the sky, and the path of Granwyn before the pervading sovereign, who would not deviate for the tumult of those who disparage our praise, though they were marshalled by their leader.

3.

Addfwyn Gaer y sydd ar don nawfed,
Addfwyn ei gwerin yn ymwared:
Ni wnant eu dwyn cyt, trwy feflhäed;
Nit ef eu defawd bod yn galed.
Ni lefaraf au, ar fy nhrwydded:

---

* The Bard, by an enigmatical description, reminds his countrymen of the ancient solemnities connected with the insular sanctuary.—1. The sacred ox of the patriarch, the *Ych Banawg*, is stationed before the lake, ready to draw the *Avanc* or *Shrine* to land, out of its watery repository.—2. It is the lake of *Eraint* ab *Erbin*, or of the *vessel* of the *lofty chiefs*.—3. The retinue of priests assembled on the occasion, and joined in the mystical procession.—4. The eagle, or symbol of the sun, was placed aloft in the *sky*, that is, in the open æthereal temple, which is often so called.—5. There was the representation of the path of *Granwyn*, or Apollo—an image of the ecliptic, in which the pomp was conducted, preceded by the waving eagle.—And 6, this was done in the presence of the great sovereign, or the sun himself—that is, it was a diurnal celebration, which commenced at the *dawn*.—See No. 6.

Nog eillion deudraeth gwell caeth Dyved.
Cyweithydd o rydd wledd waredied;
Cynnwys rhwng pob deu goreu ciwed.

A holy sanctuary there is, upon the ninth wave. Holy are its inhabitants, in preserving themselves. They will not associate in the bonds of pollution. It is not their established custom to act with severity. I will not abuse my privilege, in declaring a falsehood. The restrained man of *Dyved*[*] is better than the *shaved ones,* of the two strands. If our associate gives the banquet of the *Preservers;*[†] mutual harmony amongst brethren is the best society.

4.

Addfwyn Gaer y sydd: a'i gwna cyman,
Meddut, a molut, ac adar ban.
Llyfn ei cherddau, yn ei chalan:
A'm Arglwydd hywydd, *Hëwr* eirian,
Cyn ei fyned yn ei adwyd, yn derfyn llan,
Ef a'm rhoddes medd a gwîn o wydrin ban.

A holy sanctuary there is—it is rendered complete by the rehearsal, the hymn and the birds of the mountain.[‡] Smooth are its lays, in its periodical festival: and my lord,[§] duly observant of the *splendid mover,* before he entered his earthly cell, in the border of the circle, gave me mead and wine out of the deep crystal cup.

5.

Addfwyn Gaer y sydd yn yr Eglan;
Addfwyn y rhoddir, i bawb, ei ran.

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[*] Demetia, Pembrokeshire, and the neighbouring districts.

[†] The Cabiri, the deities of Arkite mythology.—See *Cadair Ceridwen,* in the third Section.

[‡] The Bard distinguishes three particulars in the business of his sanctuary. 1. The rehearsal of ancient lore. 2. The chaunting of hymns, in honour of the gods. 3. The interpretation of their will, by birds of augury.

[§] The hierophant, by whom the Bard had been initiated, and of whom he had received the mead and wine, or the Κυκεων of the British Ceres.

Adwen, yn Ninbych, gorwen Gwylan,
Cyweithydd wleiddydd, Udd Erlyssan:
Oedd ef fy nevawd i, nos Galan,
Lleddfawd y gân ri, ryfel eiran,
A llen, lliw ehoeg, a meddu prain;
Hyn a fwyf tafawd ar feirdd Prydain.

A holy sanctuary there is, within the gulf; there, every one is kindly presented with his portion.

I knew the eminently white *sea-mew*[*] in Dinbych—the meek associate—the lord of the supreme court: it was my custom to attend, on the eve of the festival, to what the ruler sweetly sung (the war of the splendid one[†]) with my robe of bright green,[‡] possessing a place in the assembly. Hence my word is paramount over the Bards of Britain.

6.

Addfwyn Gaer y sydd, a'i cyffrwy Ced wn;
Oedd meu ei rhydau, a ddewisswn.
Ni lyfaraf i daith rhaith rysgattwn:
Ni ddyly celennig ni wyppo hwn.
Ysgrifen Brydain, bryder briffwn,
Yn yd wna tonneu eu hamgyffrwn,
Pe reit, hyd bell i gell attreiddwn.

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[*] By the description which is given of this *sea-mew*, it is evident, he was no other than the hierophant, or chief Druid, mentioned above. Hywel, the son of Owen, describes the Druids under the same figure. The choice of this aquatic bird as their symbol, arose from their Arkite rites, and Diluvian mythology. Amongst the ancients, the sea-mew was the symbol of Minerva, as an Arkite goddess.—See *Faber's Cabiri*, V. I. p. 106, 185, &c.

The sanctuary, or sacred island, which was fabled to have wandered from place to place, like the ark of old, now fixes itself upon the border of the flood, and proves to be the insular spot, now containing the town of Tenby, in Pembrokeshire: for it is evident, from what the Bard had said before, that he means *Dinbych*, in *Dyved*. This is but a small distance from *Arberth, High Grove*, the chief seat of the mystical *Pwyll*. See Sect. V.

[†] Probably, some ancient and sacred poem upon the adventures of the Helio-arkite god.

[‡] Green was the colour of the ovate, or of him who had already been initiated into the first principles of Bardism. See Owen's Dict. V. *Glain* and *Ovydd*.

A holy sanctuary there is, with its productions of the vessel of Kêd*—I possessed myself of its courses, which I had made my choice. I will not disclose the progress of the law, which I religiously observe. He who knows not this, is not entitled to the perquisite at the festival.

The writings of *Britain*† are the first object of anxious regard: should the waves disturb their foundation, I would again, if necessary, conceal them deep in the cell.

7.

Addfwyn Gaer y sydd yn arddwyrein:
Gochawn y meddut y molut gyfrein.
Addfwyn, ar ei hôr, esgor gynrhein.
Godde gwrych dymbi, hîr ei hadein,
Dychyrch bar carreg, creg ei hadnein.
Llid y mewn tynged: treidded troth mein;
A bleiddud gorllwyd goreu affein.
Dimpyner, odduch pwy, Llad cofein.
Bendith culwydd nef gydlef afein
Arnyn, gwnel yn frowyr gorwyr Owein.

A holy sanctuary there is, exalting itself on high. The small reeds, with joined points, declare its praise: fair, in its borders, the first points shoot forth.

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* The cauldron of inspiration, implying the mysteries of Bardism. See Sect. III.

† Or writings of *Prydain*, who was the same as *Hu*. See No. 11. We may gather from hence, that the Druids had certain ancient writings, which they deemed more sacred by far, and of greater importance, than those songs and tales, which were made public, or recited in the ears of the people. These writings had already been concealed in times of persecution, probably during the Roman government: and they were known only to the Druids, or Bards of the highest order; for Taliesin tells us, that in case of necessity, he possessed the effectual means of concealing them *again*. We can only guess, in general, that these arcana comprehended the sacred history, and rituals of the Druids, together with the rules of divination, and most mysterious doctrines of the ancient priesthood.

From the beginning of the next stanza, it appears that this code was composed in the mystical characters of the Bards, consisting of reeds, and the points, and shoots of trees. To this kind of writing Taliesin alludes, when he says—"I know every reed, or twig, in the cave of the chief diviner."

A cormorant approaches me,[*] with long wings. She assaults the top of the stone with her hoarse clamour.—There is wrath in the fates! Let it burst through the stones! Contention is meet only amongst the grey wolves. The memorials of Llâd shall be secured from the assault. May the blessing of the beneficent Ruler of heaven, who is harmoniously praised in the heights, be upon them; and may he make the late posterity of Owen possessors of the land!

8.

Addfwyn Gaer y sydd ar lan Lliant:
Addfwyn yd roddir i bawb i chwant.
Gogyfarch ti fyned—boed teu fwyant—
Gwaywawr ryn rein a dderllyssant.
Duw Merchyr gweleis wyr ynghyfnofant:
Dyfieu bu gwarthau a amugant.
Ag ydd oedd friger coch ag och ardant
Oedd lludwed fyned dydd y doethant.
Ac am gefn Llech Vaelwy cylchwy friwant.
Cwyddyn y gan gefn llu o Garant.

A holy sanctuary there is, upon the margin of the flood: there shall every one be kindly presented with his wishes.

I warn thee to depart![†] Thou be prosperous! Spearmen, with vibrating spears, will occupy the spot. On the day of Mercury, I saw men in mutual enjoyment: on the day of Jove, there was a disparagement of what they had protected.

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[*] Here we perceive the augur in the solemn exercise of his divining art—the cormorant, a bird of ill omen, denounces an approaching persecution. The Druid comprehends the hint, and conceals his sacred memorials. *Llâd*, in other passages, is a name of the Arkite goddess. In Taliesin's *Angar Cyvyndawd*, she is represented as the mother of the Celtic Apollo. Her *memorials* seem to imply the same thing as the *writings of Prydain*, mentioned above.

[†] After the Bard had received the omen from the cormorant, and concealed his memorials, he still persists in celebrating his *holy sanctuary*, till he is interrupted by a repeated message from some *bird of augury, protecting spirit*, or *brother Druid*, who seems to speak to the end of the stanza.

The hair was red with blood, and there was clamourous woe. There were funeral processions on the day when they arrived. They will break the circle behind the flat stone of Maelwy. Let the multitude of our friends retire.

No. III.

A Poem of Taliesin, called PREIDDEU ANNWN, *The Spoils of the Deep.**

I HAVE had repeated occasion to mention this piece in the preceding sections: but before I insert it at length, it may be proper to observe, that Mr. Turner has introduced it in his *Vindication*, with the following preface.

" There is so much of Taliesin's poetry, which no one " can understand, that I cannot but place him, in point of " intrinsic merit, below the other Bards; although, in " the estimation of his countrymen, he seems to have been " ranked in a superior class. His *Cad Goddeu, The Battle* " *of the Trees*, is eminently incomprehensible; and so are " others. That I may not be thought to condemn him " unjustly, I will beg leave to present the reader with his " poem, called *Preiddeu Annwn, The Spoils of Annwn.*

" If its allusions are at all historical, they are too much " *involved in mythology*, to be comprehended. In his *mead* " *song*, there is a connected train of thought: in the following poem, all connexion of thought seems to have " been studiously avoided."

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* W. Archaiol. p. 45.

The author adds this note.

"It is, however, fair to remark, that if the Mabinogion, "and all the Welsh remains, were to be accurately studied, "it is propable, that enough might be gathered from them, "to elucidate some of the allusions of Taliesin to the opi- "nions, tales, and traditions of his day. This would make "intelligible many passages, now obscure."

I may be thought rather too adventurous, in encountering this select specimen of *incomprehensibility*, which was no less enigmatical to the chair of Glamorgan, than to the learned *Vindicator* of the Bards: but if I succeed in pointing out a due *connexion of thought* throughout the poem; if I can satisfactorily prove, that the Bard alludes, with consistency and accuracy, to the mysteries of the British Bacchus and Ceres; that he connects these mysteries with Diluvian mythology; and that he represents them as the basis of the Bardic or Druidical system; then I may be allowed to presume, that I possess the true key to the mystical poems, and to the adytum of British superstition. At the same time, I am ready to admit, that another hand might be more dexterous in moving the rusty wards, which guard these mysteries.

In order to make the experiment, I shall, first of all, state, that *the subject of the poem is the mythology of the deluge, and the mysteries which were celebrated in commemoration of it.*

PREIDDEU ANNWN.

1.

Golychaf wledig, pendefig, gwlad ri.
Pe ledas y pennaeth, tros draeth Mundi;

Bu cywair carchar Gwair, ynghaer Sidi.
Trwy ebostol Pwyll a Phryderi,
Neb cyn nog ef nid aeth iddi.
Y gadwyn dromlas, cywirwas, ai cedwi;
A rhag preiddeu Annwfn tost yd geni:
Ac, yd frawd, parahawd yn Barddweddi;
Tri lloneid Prydwen ydd aetham ni iddi;
Namyn Saith, ni dyrraith o Gaer Sidi.

"I will adore the sovereign, the supreme ruler of the "land. If he extended his dominion over the shores of "the world, yet in good order was the prison of *Gwair*, "in the inclosure of *Sidi*. Through the mission of *Pwyll* "and *Pryderi*, no one before him entered into it.

"The heavy blue chain didst thou, O just man, endure: "and for the spoils of the deep, woful is thy song; and "till the doom shall it remain in the Bardic prayer—*Thrice* "*the number that would have filled Prydwen, we entered into* "*the deep; excepting seven, none have returned from Caer* "*Sidi.*"

In this first stanza, we find the Bard acknowledging the existence of *one supreme God*, and declaring his resolution to adore him, *because he had shewn respect to Gwair, the just man*, and preserved the inclosure of Caer Sidi, in which he had shut him up, at the time when he extended his dominions *over the shores of the world*, or sent forth the universal deluge. The Supreme Being was, therefore, adored for his beneficent providence, which had distinguished the just man, and preserved him through a calamity which overwhelmed the world. This, I conceive, was a genuine principle of the patriarchal religion.

I have already observed, that *Gwair*, the principal person who escaped this catastrophe, was the patriarch *Noah*. The Triads represent this *Gwair*, with his family, as confined in the prison of *Oeth ag Anoeth, wrath, and the* *remission of wrath,* from which none of his descendants, to the latest posterity, attempted to escape. The allegory implies, that as the patriarch, with his family, had been shut up in the ark, so the Druids acknowledged those only as his legitimate descendants, who were brought within the pale of Arkite mysteries, and who religiously preserved the laws of their institution.

The prison of Gwair is here called *Caer Sidi.* This has been explained above, as implying, in the first place, the *ark,* in which the patriarch and his family were inclosed; secondly, the circle of the zodiac, in which their luminous emblems, the sun, moon, and planets, revolved; thirdly, the sanctuary of the British Ceres, which represented both the ark and the zodiac.

The other Caers, mentioned in the conclusion of the several stanzas, are allusive to the same history, and may be regarded as so many titles of the ark: thus,

Caer *Bediwyd,* the inclosure of the inhabitants of the world—the *ark,* which contained all that was living; or, Caer *Mediwyd,* the inclosure of the *perfect ones,* or of the *just family.*

Caer *Ri-gor,* the inclosure of the *royal assembly*—of the patriarch and his sons, who were kings of the world.

Caer *Golur,* the *gloomy inclosure*—the ark, which was closed up, so as to exclude the light.

Caer *Vandwy,* the inclosure *resting on the height.*

Caer *Ochren,* the inclosure *whose side produced life.*

The patriarch entered his inclosure, through the *mission,* or *apostleship* (which, I fear, implies a profane scoff at the gospel), of *Pwyll* and *Pryderi, reason* or *prudence,* and *serious meditation.* It has been seen, that these ideas were personified in British mythology, and that their history relates to the deluge and Arkite mysteries. In the vale of the *Boat, Pwyll* was met by *Arawn, Pendaran,* the *Arkite* *lord of thunder,* who commissioned him to take the government of the deep into his own hands for a whole year, &c.*

The *chain* mentioned by our Bard, was the symbol of that confinement, which the just man had endured; and of the restraint to which those of his descendants, who were initiated into Arkite mysteries, patiently submitted.

The *woful song* of the patriarch implies his pensive reflection upon the multitudes which had been swept away by the deluge. At the conclusion of the other stanzas, the Bard repeats the same reflection, with some variety of expression, as the burden of his own song.

Prydwen, sometimes mentioned as the *shield* of the mythological Arthur, was more properly his ship, and a title of the ark. It is derived from *Prŷd, beauty, the general order of things,* Κοσμος; and *Wen,* which marks a female character—*The lady of beauty, The lady of the world,* who had carried all its surviving inhabitants. According to the mythology of our Bard, thrice the number of men which would have filled the *ark,* embarked in their vessels on the deep; but none escaped, excepting the patriarch, and the *seven,* who were inclosed with him in Caer Sidi.

Let us now go on to the second stanza.

2.

Neud wyf glod geymyn cerdd, o chlywid,
Ynghaer Pedryfan pedyr y chwelid!
Ynghynneir o'r pair pan leferid,
Oanadl naw morwyn gochynnessid.
Neu pair pen Annwfn: pwy y vynud?
Gwrym am ei oror, a mererid,
Ni beirw bwyd llwfr, ni rydyngid.

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* See Sect. V.

Cleddyf lluch, llëawc, iddaw rydderchid:
Ac yn llaw Lleminawg ydd edewid:
A rhag drws porth Uffern llugyrn lloscid—
A phan aetham ni gan Arthur trafferth llethrid,
Namyn Saith, ni ddyrraith o Gaer Vediwid.

" Am I not contending for the praise of that lore, if it " were regarded, which was four times reviewed in the quadrangular inclosure![*] As the first sentence was it uttered " from the cauldron, which began to be warmed by the " breath of the nine damsels. Is not this the cauldron of " the ruler of the deep! What is its quality? With the " ridge of pearls round its border, it will not boil the " food of a coward, who is not bound by his sacred oath. " Against him will be lifted the bright gleaming sword: " and in the hand of the sword-bearer shall he be left: and " before the entrance of the gate of hell, shall the horns " of light be burning.——*And when we went with Arthur* " *in his splendid labours, excepting seven, none returned from* " *Caer Vediwid.*"

The Bard here insists upon the peculiar sanctity of the lore which he taught. It had been four times revised in the sacred cell, or Adytum, before it was uttered, as the *first sentence,* or fundamental doctrine of the mystical cauldron of Ceridwen, and the ruler of the deep. The subject of this sacred vase has been already introduced. It implies, metaphorically, the whole system of Arkite mysteries amongst the Druids, in the same manner as the *baptismal font* stands as an emblem of the Christian religion.

The cauldron had been first warmed by the breath of nine damsels, or prepared by those Arkite priestesses, called *Gwyllion* and *Sëon.* The same cauldron, as typifying the sacred mysteries, communicated science, wisdom, virtue, happiness, and even immortality; but it would not prepare the food of the coward, the remiss or refractory person, who wanted resolution and fortitude to preserve the institues of his order, or who disregarded the dreadful oath, with which he had bound himself, at the time of admission.

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[*] Or the inclosure which had four avenues or passages, pointing different ways.

The fate of such a wretch is described in the next sentence—" Against him will be lifted the bright gleaming " sword," &c. Of the ceremony to which our Bard alludes, the chair of Glamorgan have preserved some tradition.—" Degradation (the punishment of a refractory member) was " a particular act of the Gorsedd (solemn session) be" fore the close of it, and it was called *Dwyn cyrch cyvlavan* " *yn ei erbyn.—To bring the assault of warfare against him*, " after the decision, *all the Bards covered their heads*, and " one of them *unsheathed the sword*, named the person " aloud three times, *with the sword lifted in his hand*, add" ing, when he was last named—*the sword is naked against* " *him*."—After this he could never be re-admitted, and he was called " *A man deprived of privilege, and exposed to war*" *fare*."* This *chair* proceeded no further: but it should seem, from the language of Taliesin, that the Druids did not scruple to *use* the sword against the caitiff, thus deprived of *privilege* and *hope*, and to consign him to *Abred*, or their *lowest hell*.

The Arthur, mentioned in the conclusion of this stanza, is a mythological character, the representative of the patriarch Noah.

3.

Neud wyf glod geimyn cerdd glywanhawr!
Ynhaer Pedryfan, ynys Pybyrddor,

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* Introd. to Ll. Hên, p. 51.

Echwydd a muchedd cymysgettor,
Gwîn gloyw eu gwirawd, rhag eu gosgor—
Tri lloneid Prydwen ydd aetham ni ar fôr;
Namyn Saith, ni ddyrraith o Gaer Rigor.

"Am I not contending for the honour of a lore that de-"serves attention!

"In the quadrangular inclosure, in the island with the "strong door, the twilight and the pitchy darkness were "mixed together, whilst bright wine was the beverage, "placed before the narrow circle—

"*Thrice the number that would have filled Prydwen, we* "*embarked upon the sea; excepting seven, none returned from* "*Caer Rigor.*"

The quadrangular inclosure is the cell, or Adytum of the ark itself; and hence, of an Arkite temple. It follows, that the island with the strong door, was that of the *Sëon* or *Gwyllion*, which contained this sacred Arkite cell. The Druids seem to have appointed a great divinity, as the guardian of the door, or entrance of this sanctuary. Thus Taliesin says—

"The oak, the *mover*,* before whom heaven and earth "would tremble—a vindictive foe! The guardian of the "door is his name in our table books."

Again, in a poem cited above, *Glewlwyd Gafaelfawr, the hoary severe one, with the ample dominion*, is the guardian of the door, in the Druidical sanctuary: and the Triads make *Seithin Saidi*, Saturn or Janus, the guardian of the door of *Godo*, the *ark*.

All this has its counterpart in the mythology of other nations. "When the ark was constructed, Noah made a "*door* in its side; a circumstance continually commemo-

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* Or *Quickener*.

" rated by the Gentile writers. The entrance through it, " they esteemed a passage to death and darkness; but the " egress from it was represented as a return to life: hence " the opening and shutting of it were religiously recorded."*

The *confusion of twilight and utter darkness,* in this sacred inclosure, alludes to the internal gloom of the ark, a circumstance seldom forgotten in the mystical poems. Ceridwen, the Arkite goddess, was the mother of *Avagddu, utter darkness,* who could not be illuminated, till the renovating cauldron had boiled for a complete year.

The torches of this goddess were burning in the dead of night, and at the hour of dawn: the aspirant to the greater mysteries was cast into the sea, *Mewn boly tywyll, in a dark receptacle;* and in the poem before us, the ark is styled *Caer Golur,* the gloomy inclosure. Mr. Bryant has remarked numerous allusions to the same circumstance.

We are here told, that bright wine was the liquor placed before the narrow circle of the Diluvian patriarch. That revered personage was the first upon record, who planted the vine, and drank of its produce. He was the *Dionusus* of antiquity. The British Bards represent him under the character of *Hu,* as the *giver of wine:* and they seldom allude to his mystical festivals, without mentioning the mead and the wine, which seem to have been introduced as sacred memorials.

4.

Ni obrynaf llawyr llen llywiadur—
Tra Chaer Wydr, ni welsynt wrhyd Arthur—
Tri ugeint canhwr a sefi ar y mur;

---

* Bryant's Analysis, V. II. p. 257.
See also p. 364, where we find a divinity expressly appointed, as *guardian of the door.*

Oedd anawdd ymadrawdd a'i gwiliadur—
Tri lloneidd Prydwen ydd aeth gan Arthur;
Namyn saith, ni ddyrraith o Gaer Golur.

"I will not redeem the multitudes with the ensign of the "governor. Beyond the inclosure of *glass*, they beheld "not the prowess of Arthur.

"Thrice twenty hundred men stood on its wall: it was "difficult to converse with its centinel.

"*Thrice the number that would have filled Prydwen went "forth with Arthur; excepting seven, none returned from "Caer Golur.*"

The Bard here represents the inhabitants of the old world, as ready to enlist under the banners of the patriarch, when alarmed by the prospect of impending ruin.—They were ascending the sides of the ark, and imploring protection; but they implored in vain. The circumstance is poetically imagined.

The ark is here called Caer *Wydr*, the inclosure *of glass*. We are not, hence to conclude, that the Druids regarded the sacred ship as constructed of that material; but they esteemed certain little glass models, as very sacred symbols of the mystical vessel, and held the material itself in religious esteem. Thus the stranger, in the *chair of Taliesin*, is introduced to the nocturnal mysteries, by exhibiting his *boat of glass*, which must have been an emblem of the ark.

Merddin Emrys and his nine Bards put to sea in the *house of glass*, which could have been nothing more than a mystical representative of the ark.

The Druid distributed the sacred liquor to his disciples, *O wydrin Ban*, out of the deep cup of glass: and those sacred insignia, the Glain, and the Ovum Anguinum, were preparations of some vitrified substance. All these commemorate that sacred vessel, which, amongst its multitude of names, had that of *Caer Wydr*.

5.

Ni obrynaf i llawyr llaes eu cylchwy.
Ni wyddant hwy py ddydd peridydd pwy,
Py awr, ym meinddydd, y ganed Cwy,
Pwy gwnaeth ar nid aeth doleu Devwy.
Ni wddant hwy yr ych brych, bras ei benrhwy,
Seith ugein cygwn yn ei aerwy—
A phan aetham ni gan Arthur, afrddwl gofwy;
Namyn saith, ni ddyrraith o Gaer Vandwy.

" I will not redeem the multitudes with trailing shields.
" They knew not on what day the stroke would be given,
" nor what hour in the serene day, Cwy (the agitated per-
" son) would be born, or who prevented his going into the
" dales of Devwy (the possession of the water). They
" know not the brindled ox with the thick head-band,
" having seven score knobs in his collar.—*And when we*
" *went with Arthur, of mournful memory; excepting seven,*
" *none returned from Caer Vandwy.*"

Taliesin here reprobates those inhabitants of the old and new world, who fled with trailing shields, or wanted the invincible fortitude of Bardism. Providence had not discovered to the former, on what day the fatal stroke of the deluge would be given; at what time the patriarch, who was tossed upon the waters, would be born again from his vessel, or who prevented his sinking to those dales, which were covered with the deluge.

The latter knew not the *brindled ox*, &c.

In almost every British memorial of the deluge, the *ox* is introduced. The oxen of *Hu the Mighty* drew the beaver out of the lake, and prevented the repetition of the deluge.

And an ox or bull, as I have shewn in the second section, was the symbol of the Helio-arkite god.

Whatever is to be understood by the *knobs*, in the collar of this brindled ox, it must be observed, that *seven score*, or seven score and seven, constituted a sacred number with the Druids, or ancient Bards. Thus Taliesin says, that seven score *Ogyrvens*, or mystical personages, pertain to the British muse. The mystical trees exhibited to Merddin, were 147: and the stones which completed the great temple on Salisbury plain, are computed at 140. If the sacred ox was kept in this temple, the stones of the fabric may have been described, as composing his ring, or collar. By *not knowing* this ox, the Bard implies an ignorance of Arkite mysteries, or of the Druidical religion.

6.

Ni obrynaf i lawyr llaes eu gehen.
Ni wddant py ddydd peridydd Pen:
Py awr, ym meinddydd, y ganed Perchen;
Py fîl a gadwant ariant y pen—
Pan aetham ni gan Arthur, afrddwl gynhen;
Namyn saith, ni ddyrraith o Gaer Ochren.

"I will not redeem the multitudes with unguarded "mouths. They know not on what day the chief was "appointed: on what hour in the serene day, the proprietor was born; or what animal it is, which the silver-headed ones protect—

"*When we went with Arthur into the mournful conflict;* "*excepting seven, none returned from Caer Ochren.*"

The persons of *unguarded mouths*, were those who violated the oath of secrecy, administered to them before their initiation. The *chief* and the *proprietor* are titles of the deified patriarch, and of his representative in the mysteries: and the *animal* was the symbolical ox, mentioned in the preceding stanza, which was kept by the hoary Druids.

7.

Mynaich dychnud, fal cun in cor,
O gyfranc uddudd ai gwyddanhor—
Ai un hynt gwynt; ai un dwfr mor:
Ai un ufel tan, twrwf diachor!

"Monks congregate, like dogs in their kennel, wrangling "with their instructors.—

"Is there but one course to the wind—but one to the "water of the sea! Is there but one spark in the fire of "boundless energy.

Blake

Taliesin having asserted the merit of his own system, proceeds in this, and the concluding stanza, to reprove the monks, the determined adversaries of the Bards, for their illiberality and their ignorance. He seems to say—*Though one may be right, it does not follow, that the person who thinks differently must be wrong.*—"Is there but *one course* "to the wind, &c.

8.

Myneich dychnud fal bleiddiawr,
O gyfranc uddudd ai gwyddyanhawr.
Ni wddant pan ysgar deweint a gwawr;
Neu wynt pwy hynt, pwy ei rynnawr;
Py va ddifa, py dir y plawr.
Bed sant yn ddifant o bet allawr:
Golychaf i Wledig, Pendevig Mawr!

"Monks congregate like wolves, wrangling with their "instructors. They know not when the darkness and the "dawn divide; nor what is the course of the wind, or the "cause of its agitation; in what place it dies away, or on "what region it expands.

"The grave of the saint is vanishing from the foot of "the altar: I will adore the SOVEREIGN, the GREAT "SUPREME!"

This is the proper conclusion of the poem, and it has something of sublimity. The Bard had introduced his subject, with a resolution to adore the *Great Supreme,* who had preserved the just man from the waters of the deluge; and he closes with the same sentiment.

Some idle copyist, however, as usual, has added a Christian idea, in a verse which disagrees with what has gone before, in language, in metre, and in final rhyme—

Na bwyf trist, Crist am gwaddawl.
"That I be not sorrowful, may Christ be my portion."

No. IV.

IN the Celtic Researches, I have observed, that *Tydain Tad Awen—Titan, the father of inspiration,* the *third* of the chief *regulators;* and *Angar, the fountain of heat,* the son of *Ladon,* and the *third* of the equal judges, corresponded in character with Apollo. Yet Tydain and Angar are evidently connected with the Arkite theology of the Britons. The former had his tomb, or shrine, in the hill of *Aren;* and Mr. Bryant informs us, that *Aren* was the ark.

Ladon, the mother of Angar, was no other than Latona; and the same great mythologist assures us, that *Isis,* the Arkite goddess, and Latona, were the same personage.

This solar divinity of the Britons appears again in a poem of Taliesin, with the title *Teyrn On,* the *sovereign* ON. And he still retains the same ordinate rank, being described as the *third deep mystery of the sage.*

A passage in Taliesin's poem, on *the rod of Moses,* connects this *On* with the Egyptian divinity, *On,* or *Helios.* The patriarch Joseph had married a daughter of the priest, or prince, of *On,* which is also called *Heliopolis;* and thus he had become the *son* of this prince. And the Bard says of Joseph,

" The son of *Teyrn On* collected treasures from his asso-
" ciates, and the sons of Jacob had those treasures in
" possession."

The poem, which commemorates the Helio-arkite divinity by this name, is entitled *Cadair Teyrn On, the chair of the sovereign On.* It is curious upon many accounts, and particularly as it was composed upon a memorable occasion, the inauguration of the renowned Arthur. I shall therefore give it entire.

KADAIR TEYRN ON.*

1.

Areit awdl eglur,
Awen tra messur,
Am gwr deu awdwr,
O echen Aladur,
A'i ffonsai, a'i ffwr,
A'i rëon rechdur,
A'i ri rhwyfiadur,
A'i rif ysgrythwr,
A'i goch, gochlesswr,
A'i ergyr dros fwr,

---

* W. Archaiol. p. 65.

A'i gadair gymmesswr,
Ymhlith gosgordd mwr.
Neus dug o gawrmwr,
Meirch gwelw gostrodwr,
Teyrn On, henwr,
Heilyn Pasgadwr,
Tredydd dofn doethwr,
I fendigaw Arthur.

The declaration of the luminous strain, of the unbounded Awen (Bardic muse), concerning the person of two origins,[*] of the race of *Al Adur*,[†] with his divining staff, and his pervading glance, and his neighing coursers, and his regulator of kings, and his potent number, and his blushing purple, and his vaulting over the boundary, and his appropriate chair, amongst the established train.

Lo, he is brought from the firm inclosure,[‡] with his light-coloured bounding steeds—even the *sovereign* On, the ancient, the generous feeder,[§] the third profound object of the sage, to pronounce the blessing upon Arthur.

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[*] Alluding, perhaps, to the double birth of the Arkite god. Thus Dionusus (Noah) was styled Διφυης. Or else, the Bard may have had an eye to the mystical union of the *patriarch* and the *sun*.

[†] אלאדר, *The Glorious God.*

I shall not undertake to explain the various particulars introduced in this passage: only, I suppose, that by the solar god's *vaulting over the boundary,* the Bards intimated his crossing the equator. This may have been represented by some mystic rite. Diodorus tells us, that Apollo had his appropriate chair in the great Hyperborean temple, which antiquaries, of no mean name, pronounce to have been no other than the famous structure of *Stonehenge.* There the god amused himself with a dance, once in nineteen years, amongst his established train. As it was the known practice for certain priests, in the celebration of the mysteries, personally to represent the *sun* and *moon,* I conjecture that the Druids, in their great festival of the cycle, dressed up a pageant of their own order, to personate this luminous divinity.

[‡] *Cawr mûr, firm inclosure,* or *strong boundary,* seems to mean the firmament.

[§] Or, *Heilin the Feeder,* the solar divinity, whom the Bards always place in the third rank.

2.

Arthur fendigad,
Ar gerdd gyfaenad,
A'r wyneb ynghad,
Arnaw bystylad!
Pwy y tri chynweissad,
Awerchedwis gwlad?
Pwy y tri chyfarwydd,
A gedwis arwydd,
A ddaw wrth awydd,
Erbyn eu harglwydd?

Arthur! may he be blessed, according to the lore of the society,* when his face meets the battle, which wantonly assaults him!

Who are the three chief ministers, who have defended the country? Who are the three experienced men, who having preserved the token, are coming with alacrity to meet their lord?

3.

Ban rinwedd rotwydd,
Ban fydd hyn hoywedd.
Ban corn cerddetrwydd:
Ban biw, wrth echwydd:
Ban gwir, pan ddisgleir;
Bannach pan lefair.
Ban, pan ddoeth o bair
Ogyrven, Awen teir.
Bum Mynawg, mynweir,
Ynghorn i'm neddair:

---

* Apollo is here introduced in person, as pronouncing the solemn benediction, and calling his chosen votaries into his presence, to join in the celebration of mystic rites.

The remainder of the poem is put into the mouth of the priest, who represents this divinity.

Ni ddyly cadair,
Ni gatwo fy ngair.
Cadeir gennyf glaer,
Awen hyawdl daer.

Eminent is the virtue of the free course, when *this dance*[*] is performed. Loud is the horn of the lustrator, when the kine[†] move in the evening. Manifest is truth when it shines; more manifest when it speaks; and loud it spoke, when it came forth from the cauldron of Awen, the ardent goddess.

I have been Mynawg,[‡] wearing the collar, and carrying my horn in my hand. He is not entitled to the presidency, who will not keep my decree. I hold the splendid chair of the eloquent, the ardent Awen.

4.

Pwy yw enw y teir caer,
Rhwng lliant a llaer?
Nis gwyr, ni fo taer,
Eissillut eu Maer.
Pedair caer yssydd
Ym Mhrydain Powyssedd:
Rhieu Merwerydd.
Am ni fo, nid fydd:
Nid fydd, am nid fo.
Llynghessawr a fo;
Tohid gwaneg tra gro,
Tir dylyn, dir, bo
Nag allt nag ado,
Na bryn na thyno,

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[*] The *dance*, in which Apollo joined with his votaries.

[†] The *kine* of Ceres, which drew her ark, or chest. Her procession seems to have commenced in the evening, as that of the solar divinity did in the morning. See No. 6.

[‡] Or Minauc—the deified patriarch—and hence his priest and representative.

Na rhynnawd Godo,
Rhag gwynt, pan sorho;
Cadeira Teyrn On:
Celfydd rwy catwo.

What are the names of the three Caers,[*] between the flowing and the ebbing tide? The man of slow intellect recognizes not the offspring of their president. Four Caers[†] there are, stationary, in Britain: their governors are agitators of fire.

As for what may not be, it will not be—It will not be, because it may not be.[‡]

Let him *(On)* be the conductor of his fleet[§]—then, were the billows to overwhelm beyond the strand, so that of firm land there should indeed remain neither cliff nor defile, nor hill nor dale, nor the smallest sheltering cover from the wind, when its fury is roused; yet the sovereign On will protect his chair: skilful is he who guards it.

5.

Ceissitor yngno!
Ceissitor Cedig,
Cedwyr colledig.
Tebygaf ddull dîg,
O ddifa Pendefig,
O ddull difynnig:
O Leon lluryg,
Dyrchafawd Gwledig.
Am derwyn Hen Enwig,

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[*] Insular sanctuaries. See the Essay, Sect. II. and Append No. II. and VI. The Bard may also allude to the sacred rafts, or boats. See Sect. III.

[†] Sanctuaries, containing the cells of the sacred fire.

[‡] A curious specimen of Druidical logic.

[§] The pageant means to say—"Were the world to be again overwhelmed, "as at the deluge, yet the Arkite sanctuary, the chair of the Helio-arkite god should remain in security.

Breuhawd bragawd brîg—
Breuhawd eissorig.
Orig, a merin,
Am derfyn chwefrin,
Ieithoedd eddein,
Mordwyaid merin.
Aches ffysgiolin
O blan Seraphin,
Dogyn, dwfn, diwerin,
Dyllyngein Elphin.

There let them be sought! Let application be made to Kedig,* for the men of *Ked*,† who have been lost.

When it seemed most likely that, in a wrathful manner, the nobility would be destroyed, with lacerated forms, then, clad in legionary mail, a sovereign was exalted.

Round the ancient and renowned focus, the shooting sprigs were broken: they were broken into tallies.‡

" A moment, and they shall dissolve! Round the bor-
" ders, the severe speeches of the roving sea adventurers
" shall vanish away.

" A quick gliding train of radiant seraphim, in due or-
" der, mysterious and pure, shall deliver Elphin."

---

* The same as *Kéd*, the Arkite goddess, whose renovating cauldron could restore the slain to life: but, at the same time, it deprived them of utterance, or obliged them to take an oath of secrecy. See Turner's Vindic. p. 283.

The efficacy of this cauldron is here illustrated, by the energy which was displayed by a prince of the Bardic order, after the massacre of the nobles.

† Or *warriors*.

‡ This passage describes the rite of sortilege—the concluding lines contain the vaticination, deduced from the experiment.

No. V.

In the last poem, we have seen the solar divinity, as personified and represented by his priest and namesake, *Taliesin,* connected with the Arkite superstitions of the Britons.

There is also reason to conclude, that the *magi* of Britain, like those of Persia, worshipped the sun, under the name and character of *fire.* Let the reader form his judgment upon this subject, from the following extract of Taliesin's poem on the mythological horses.*

Torrid, anuynudawl,
Tuthiawl *Dân* iogawl—
Ef iolen, o dduch lawr!
Tân Tân! hustin Gwawr!
Uch awel uchel;
Uch no pob nyfel!
Mawr ei anyfel:
Ni thrig yngofel,
Na neithiawr Llyr.
Llyr llwybyr y tebyr
Dy far, ynghynebyr.
Gwawr gwên wrth Uchyr—
Wrth wawr, wrth wrys;
Wrth pob hefelis;
Wrth hefelis Nwython;
Wrth pedyr afäon,
Arddwyreaf i a varn Gwrys,
Cadarn trydar—dwfn ei gâs.

Let him burst forth, with rapid speed—The moving, the vehement *fire: even he whom we adore, high above the earth!*

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* W Archaiol. p. 43.

"THE FIRE, THE FIRE!" whispers Aurora.—"He is "high above the lofty gale. High above every sacred "spirit! Vast is the bulk of his courser! He will not de- "lay in the skirmish; nor at the wedding feast of Llyr" (the sea).

Thy path* in the sea is perceived—thy impulse in the mouths of rivers!

Aurora, smiling, repels the gloom!

At the dawn, at his ardent hour, at every meet season, at the meet season of his turnings, at the four stages of his course, will I extol *him*, who judges the ambitious—the mighty lord of the din†—dreadful is his wrath!

This, surely, implies the practice of *fire-worship*. The Bard, however, has not forgotten his Arkite lore. In the course of the poem, he celebrates the mythological steeds, which pertained to that superstition; and then recites a catalogue of his own transmigrations; amongst which we have the following—

Bûm llif, yn eirth.
Bûm ton, yn engweirth.
Bûm ysgof ysgeiniad Dilyw.

"I have been a *flood* on the slope. I have been a *wave* "*on the extended shore.* I have been a *memorial of the* "*spreading deluge.*"

---

[*] It should seem, that the Bard imputes the flowing and ebbing of the tide to the sun's influence.

[†] The phrase *Rhwyv Trydar, lord*, or *leader of the din*, which Taliesin and Aneurin apply to the sun, with others of similar import, seem to denote, that the Druids welcomed his risings with frantic shouts of joy, accompanied with the vocal hymn, and instrumental music.

No. VI.

A Poem of Taliesin, called, BUARTH BEIRDD, *The Ox-pen of the Bards.**

1.

Edd, ympeibli, oedd ympuylled,
O feirdd Prydein, pryddest ofer,
Ymryoreu, ymryorsedd,
Digawn gofal i gofan gordd.
Wyf eissyg pren cyfyn an gerdd.
Buarth Beirdd, ar nis gwypo,
Pymthengmil drostaw,
Yn ei gymhwyaw.
Wyf cerddoliad: wyf ceiniad claer:
  Wyf dwr: wyf Dryw:
  Wyf saer: wyf syw:
Wyf sarph: wyf serch, ydd ymgestaf.
Nid wyf fardd syn, yn yryfreidiaw.
Pan gân ceinied, canu yngof.
Nyt ef wnafyt wy ryfedd uchon.
Handid a mi eu herbyniaw;
Mal arfoll dillad heb law;
Mal ymsawd yn llyn, heb naw.

Gliding with rapidity were my thoughts, over the vain poetic art of the Bards of Britain,† who labouring to make an excessive shew at the solemn meeting, with sufficient care hammer out a song. I require a *staff*, at unity with the Bardic lore. As for him who knows not the *ox-pen* ‡ of the Bards, may fifteen thousand overpower and afflict him at once!

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* W. Archaiol. p. 27.

† Taliesin censures those Bards who were ambitious of displaying their talents, without having acquired an accurate knowledge of the mystic lore of the order. It appears from the sequel, that his satire is pointed chiefly against those poetical geniuses, who attended at the gates of the great.

‡ The insular cell or stall of the sacred ox, which represented the Arkite god, and was known only to the regular Bards or Druids.

I am a skilful composer: I am a clear singer: I am a tower:* I am a Druid: I am an architect: I am a prophet: I am a serpent: I am love: in the social banquet will I indulge.

A Bard am I, not doating upon superfluous trifles. When a master sings, his song will be close to the subject. He will not be searching for those remote wonders.

Shall I then admit *these,* like men suing for garments, without a hand to receive them—like men toiling in the lake, without a ship!†

2.

Tyrfi aches eofn, yngradd
Uchel; yngwaed, morddwyd trefydded.
Craig, am waneg, wrth wawr, trefnad,
An clut ysgrut, esgar noddiad:
Craig pen Perchen, pen anygnad.
Yna gwna meddut medddawt meddydd—
Wyf Cell: wyf dell: wyf darw *Becrlled:*
Wyf llogell cerdd: wyf lle ynydd:
Caraf y gorwydd, a gorail clyd,
A bardd a bryd, ni pryn yred,
Nyt ef caraf amryssoniad:
A geibl celfydd, ny meuedd medd.
Madws myned i'r ymddiod,
A chelfyddeid, am gelfyddyd,
A chanclwm, cystwm cywlad.
Bugeil bröoedd, porthoedd neirthiad,

---

* The mystagogue, as usual, blends his own personal character with the symbols of his god—the *tower* or *pyramid,* the *serpent,* &c.

† Several whimsical comparisons are added in the original poem, for the purpose of ridiculing the pretended Bards; but I have omitted them, as destitute of interest.

Mal ymdaith, heb drefet, i gad——
Wyf bardd neuodd, wyf kyv kadeir:
Digonaf i feirdd llafar llestair.——

Boldly* swells the stream to its high limit. Let the thigh be pierced in blood.—Let the rock beyond the billow, be set in order, at the dawn, displaying the countenance of HIM, who receives the exile into his sanctuary.—The rock of the *Supreme Proprietor*, the chief place of tranquillity.

Then let the giver of the mead feast cause to be proclaimed.†—" I am the cell; I am the opening chasm; I " am the bull *Becr Llêd;*‡ I am the repository of the mys- " tery; I am the place of reanimation. I love the tops of " trees, with the points well connected,‖ and the Bard " who composes without meriting a repulse: but him I " love not, who delights in contention. He who traduces " the adept, shall not enjoy the mead.§—It is time to has-

---

[*] This passage describes the preparation for the solemn periodical rite, of removing the shrine out of the cell, in the Arkite island, which seems to have been surrounded only at high water. Here we may remark. 1. A ritual observation of the time of flood, alluding to the deluge. 2. A fanatical rite of piercing the thigh, so as to draw blood.—Thus, the idolatrous Israelites " cried aloud, and cut themselves, after their manner, with knives and lancets, " till the blood gushed out upon them."—3. A ritual adorning of the sacred rock, which was, at that time, to display the countenance of the Arkite god. 4. This was done at the dawn, that the Helio-Arkite god might be coming forth from the cell, at the precise hour of the sun's rising. 5. This rock was the chief place of tranquillity; for here the divinity was supposed to reside, excepting at the time of the solemn procession. 6. This patriarchal god, the *Supreme Proprietor*, was he who received his family, exiled from the world, into his ark or sanctuary.

[†] This proclamation is made in the name of the *Arkite cell,* and of the *tauriform god.*

[‡] A foreign term: perhaps from בקר, which implies both an *ox* or *bull,* and also the *dawn* or *morning;* compounded with להט, *flame, fire, inchantment.*

The *bull of fire* was an apt title for the Helio-Arkite god, as the bull was the symbol of the patriarch, and the sun was worshipped in the form of *fire,* or *flame.*

It will occur to the reader, that the other meanings of these terms, were strictly pertinent to the mysticism of the Druids, whose god came forth in the *morning,* and was esteemed the president of *inchantors.*

[‖] The mystagogue requires a song, not only perfectly consistent with the lore of the Bards, but also, noted in their mystical characters, or *omen-sticks.*

[§] That is, " Shall not be admitted to the mysteries, where the mead is " ritually administered by the priests.

" ten to the banquet, where the skilful ones are employed
" in their mysteries, with the hundred *knots*[*]—the custom nb
" of our countrymen."

The shepherds of the plains, the supporters of gates,[†] are like persons marching to battle, without their clan.——I am the Bard of the hall, I am the stock that supports the chair: I shall succeed in impeding the progress of the loquacious Bards.

No. VII.

Conclusion of Taliesin's CAD GODDEU, *or Battle of the Trees.*[‡]

1.

Handid cynt, myr mawr,
Erpan gigleu'r awr,
A'n deilas blaen bedw,
A'n datrith, a'n datedw.
A'n maglas blaen derw,
O warchan Maelderw;
Wherthinrawg, tu craig,
Nêr, nid ystereig.

Existing of yore, in the great seas, from the time when the shout[*] was heard, we[†] were put forth, decomposed and simplified, by the tops of the birch.[‡] The tops of the oak[§] connected us together, by the incantation of Mael Derw;[‖] whilst smiling at the side of the rock, Nêr[¶] remained in calm tranquillity.

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[*] By which, the symbolical sprigs above mentioned, were confined to their places, in the composition of the sacred hymn.

[†] Who seem, according to the vulgar phrase, to *prop the gates* of the great, where they attend as venal minstrels. As Druidism was not now established by law, the president had no weapon but his satire, wherewith to *silence* these poetasters.

[‡] This piece contains much of the Helio-arkite lore: but it is so full of mystical allusions, which are become obscure, from the loss of monuments, that I hope to be pardoned, If I do not succeed in explaining the whole. It is here exhibited, in order to exercise the ingenuity of better mythologists.
See W. Archaiol. p. 30.

2.

Nid o Fam a Thâd,
Pan ymddigonad,
A'm crëu, am crëad;
O naw rhith llafanad,
O ffrwyth, O ffrwytheu,
O ffrwyth Duw dechreu,
O friallu, blodeu bre,
O flawd gwydd a goddeu,
O bridd, o briddred,

---

[*] Some passages in the modern Bards might countenance the idea, that this *shout* refers to the Creation; but I rather think, the mythologist alludes to the joy which took place at the opening of the ark, and the putting forth of its inhabitants.

[†] The original fraternity of Bards and Druids.

[‡] As *Bedwen*, a *birch*, implies the *may-pole*, or *Phallus*; and, as the term is used by a celebrated Bard, D. ab Gwilym, in a very gross sense: I suspect Taliesin alludes to the powers of nature, in their simplest form.

[§] The oak was sacred to the great god of the Druids, who is styled *Buanawr*, the *quickener, before whom heaven and earth tremble—a dreadful foe, whose name in the table book* is *Dryssawr*, the *deity of the door*. This must apply to the deified patriarch, who received his connected family into the ark, and his connected votaries into the Druidical sanctuary.

[‖] *Beneficent of the oaks*. There is a most dark and difficult poem, called the *Incantation of Maelderw*. See No. XVI.

[¶] *Nereus*, the deluge, the abyss, which was now appeased. The name seems to be derived from the Hebrew נהר, Ner, *to run or flow, as water.*—"Hence (says Mr. Parkhurst) the Greeks and Romans had their Nereus, which originally signified *the great abyss*, or *the sea considered as communicating with it*." Thus Nereus is addressed in the Orphic hymn.

Possessor of the ocean's *gloomy depth*,
Ground of the sea, earth's *bourn* and *source of all*,
Shaking *prolific Ceres' sacred seat*,
When, in the deep recesses of thy reign,
The madding blasts are, by thy power, confin'd;
But oh! the earthquake's dreadful force forefend!

Heb. Lex. V. נהר.

Pan ym digoned;
O flawd danet,
O ddwfr ton nawfed.

When my formation was accomplished,* not of mother and father was I produced; but of nine elementary forms—of the fruit of fruits; of the fruit of the primordial god; of primroses, the blossoms of the mount; of the flowers of trees and shrubs; of earth, in its terrene state was I modelled; of the flower of nettles, and the water of the ninth wave.

3.

A'm swynwysei Math,
Cyn bûm diaered.
Am swynwys i Wydion,
Mawr nwr o Brython,
O Eurwys, o Eurwn,
O Euron, O Fedron,
O bump pumhwnt Celfyddon,
Athrawon, ail Math.
Pan ymddygaid,
A'm swynwys i Wledig,
Pan fu led losgedig.
A'm swynwys Sywydd
Sywyddon, cyn byd,
Pan fei gennyf fi vot,
Pan fei faint byd hardd,
Bardd Budd an gnawd:
A'r wawd y tueddaf,
A draetho tafawd.

---

* From henceforth, the mystagogue describes the formation, and details the history of the great president of the Druidical order, the priest, prophet, and vicegerent of the Helio-arkite god; who, upon the principle of the metempsychosis, had preserved his existence and his identity through all ages, from the time when the ark was first constructed.

The fruits, flowers, earth, and water here mentioned, are the same kind of ingredients which were used in the mystical purifications, with a view to *form* or *regenerate* the members of the Bardic order.

I was exorcised by Mâth,[*] before I became immortal. I was exorcised[†] by Gwydion, the great purifier of the Brython, of Eurwys, of Euron and Medron, of the multitude of scientific teachers, children of Math.

When the removal[‡] took place, I was exorcised by the sovereign, when he was half consumed. By the sage of sages was I exorcised in the primitive world, at which time I had a being: when the host of the world was in dignity, frequent was the benefit of the Bard.[§] I am he who influence the song of praise, which the tongue recites.

4.

Gwarieis yn llychwr:
Cysgais ym mhorffor.
Neu bûm yn ysgor,
Gan Ddylan, ail môr,
Ynghylchedd, ymherfedd,
Rhwng deulin teyrnedd,
Yn deu wayw anchwant,
O nef, pan doethant
Yn Annwfn llifeiriant.
Wrth frwydin, dybyddant
Pedwar ugein kant,
A gweint ar eu chwant.
Nid ynt hyn, nid ynt iau
No mi, yn eu bannau.

I sported in the gloom;[‖] I slept in purple; I truly was

---

[*] Mâth was a mighty operator with the magic wand, who, at the time of the deluge, set the elements at large; and Gwydion was the Hermes of the Britons.

Compare No. X. with *Cadair Ceridwen.*

[†] These repeated exorcisms, or purifications by mystical rites, seem to imply the initiation of the great pontifical character, every time he descended into a new body.

[‡] The separation of the Noachidæ, or the dispersion from Babel.

[§] Or—"The Bard of *Búdd* conversed much with men."

[‖] This passage clearly asserts, that the hierarch passed through the deluge, in the ship with Dylan, son of the sea, embraced in the centre, between the royal knees, when, like the rushing of hostile spears, the floods came forth, from heaven to the great deep. On the perforated surface, fourscore hundred* assemble, attendant on their will. They are neither older nor younger than myself in their divisions.

5.

Arial cannwr a geni.
Pawb, o naw cant,
Oedd gennyf inneu,
Ynghleddyf brith gwaed.
Bri am darwedd—O Ddofydd;
A golo lle ydd oedd.
O dof hyd lâs baedd,
Ef gwrith, ef dadwrith,
Ef gwrith ieithoedd.
Llachar ei enw, llawfer,
Lluch llywei nifer,
Ys gein ynt, yn ufel,
O dof yn uchel.

'Tis the animated singer who chaunts. The complete number of nine hundred pertained to me, with my blood-stained sword.† To me was dignity allotted by Dovydd;‡ and where he was there was protection.

If I come to the green plain of the boar,§ he will com-

---

which was regarded as a great lustration. And this achievement was performed in the sacred vessel of the patriarch.

* These 8000 were, perhaps, sacred fountains, which poured forth their waters to meet the descending rain, and complete the lustration of the globe.

† Stained with the blood of victims, which he had sacrificed.

‡ *Domitor, God.*

§ " Tacitus informs us, that the Estyi (a German tribe) worshipped the
" mother of the gods, and that the symbol which they used was a *boar*——the
" mother of the gods—— was, in short, the ark of Noah, from which issued
" all the hero-gods of paganism. With regard to the boar—we find it intro-
" duced very conspicuously into many of those legendary traditions, which

pose, he will decompose, he will form languages. The strong-handed darter of light is he styled: with a gleam he sets in order his numbers, who will cause the flame to spread when I ascend on high.

6.

Bûm neidr fraith, ym mryn.
Bûm gwiber yn llyn.
Bûm ser gan gynbyn.
Bûm bwysferhyn,
Fy nghassul am cawg;
Armaaf, nid yn ddrwg,
Pedwar ugeint mwg,
Ar bawb a ddyddwg.
Pum pemhwnt angell
A ymdal am cyllell.
Whech March Melynell:
Canwaith y sydd well,
Fy march Melyngan,
Cyfred a gwylan,
Mi hun nid eban,
Cyfrwng môr a glan.
Neu gorwyf gwaedlan,
Arnaw cant cynrhan.
Rhudd em fy nghylchwy,
Eur fy ysgwydrwy.
Ni ganed, yn adwy,
A vu im govwy,
Namyn Goronwy,
O ddoleu Edrywy.

" relate to the great event of the deluge. It appears to have been one of the " symbols of the ark."—Faber's *Myst. of the Cabiri*, V. I. p. 220.

" Perhaps, if the matter be expressed with perfect accuracy, we ought rather to say, that a *boar* was symbolical of Noah, and a *sow* of the ark. " Hence we find, that as Vishnou was feigned to have metamorphosed himself " into a boar, so the nurse of the Arkite Jupiter, or, in other words, the Noetic " ship, is said by Agathocles to have been a sow."—*Note. Ibid.*

I have been a spotted adder* on the mount—I have been a viper in the lake—I have been stars† among the supreme chiefs; I have been the weigher of the falling drops,‡ drest in my priest's cloke, and furnished with my bowl.

Not unskilfully do I presage, at fourscore smoking altars,§ the fate which will befal every man. To my knife,|| a multitude of thighs have submitted.

Six steeds ¶ there are of yellow hue: than these, a hundred times better is *Melyngan*, my steed, swift as the sea-mew, which will not pass by me, between the sea and the shore.

With the circle of ruddy gems on my golden shield,** do I not preside over the area of blood, which is guarded by a hundred chiefs? The man has not been born, who can compare with me in the gap, excepting it be Goronwy,§§ from the dales of Edrywy.

7.

Hirwyn fy myssawr.
Pell na bûm heussawr.
Treiglais y mewn llawr,
Cyn bûm llëenawr.

---

* The adder or viper was a symbol of the Helio-arkite god; and hence of his priest, who occupied his station upon the sacred mount, or in the Diluvian lake.

† A constellation, representing a sacrificing priest.

‡ A priest, representing the Diluvian god.

|| He supported the character of a soothsayer, or haruspex.

§ He was a sacrificing priest.

¶ Sacred ships—symbols of the ark. Melyngan was of this order, as appears by the road which he travelled. I have shewn, in a note upon No. II. that the sea-mew was a Diluvian symbol.

** The shield of the Helio-arkite god, and of his priest, having the image of Caer Sidi, the zodiac, or the Druidical temple, formed of gems, and set in gold. The device still appears upon some old British coins. The hierarch presided in the area of the altar, which was guarded by the priests, and drenched with the blood of victims.

§§ *Gor-on-wy, Supreme Lord of the Water*—the deified patriarch.

Treiglais, cylchyneis,
Kysgeis cant ynys;
Cant kaer a thrugys.
  Derwyddon doethur,
Darogenwch i Arthur,
Yssid y sydd gynt
Neu'r mi, ergenhynt,
A Christ y croccaw
A dydd brawd rhag llaw,
Ac am un adderyw,
O ystyr dilyw?
Eurem yn euryll,
Mi hydwyf berthyll,
Ac ydwyf drythyll,
O ormes Fferyll.

Long and white are my fingers. It is long since I have been a herdsman.* I wandered in the earth, before I became a proficient in learning. I wandered, I went the circuit, I slept in a hundred islands; through a hundred Caers I toiled.

Ye intelligent Druids, declare to Arthur all that has been predicted of yore. Have they† not sung of me, and of Christ‡ that was crucified, and of the day of future doom, and of one that has been endowed with the lore of the deluge.

With my precious golden device upon my piece of gold,

---

* So Heilin, the Helio-arkite god, is styled *Pasgadwr*, the *feeder*, No. IV. The Bards had some tradition that their solar divinity, or his chief priest and representative, in ancient times, had been a herdsman or shepherd. The Greeks told the same tale of their Apollo.
See Apollodor. L. I. c. 9. and L. III. c. 10.

† That is, the diviners of former times.

‡ This sacred name is introduced as a cloak into many of the heathen songs of the Britons.

Lo, I am that splendid one, who sportively come from the invading host of the Feryll.*

No. VIII.

Dialogue between Ugnach, the Son of Mydno, of Caer Sëon, and Taliesin, of Caer Deganwy.†

TALIESIN.

Marchawc, a girch y Dinas,
Ae con gwinion, ae cirn bras,
Nyth adwaen: ni rythwelas.

O knight, who approachest the city with white dogs‡ and large horns,§ I know thee not: to my eyes thou art not familiar.

UGNACH.

Marchawc, a circh ir Aber,
Yar March cadarn, cadfer,
Dabre genhiw: nim gwatter.

Thou knight, who repairest to the river's mouth, on a stout, warlike steed,‖ come with me; I take no denial.

TALIESIN.

Mi nid aw ina in awr:

---

* Or *Pheryll, Cabiri—Helio-arkites.*

† W. Archaiol. p. 46.
The monks say that Ugnach, otherwise called Mygnach, the son of Mydnaw, the *ship mover,* was principal of the college of *Caer Gybi,* or Holyhead. But these legendaries often confound the votaries of Druidism, with the early saints of their own calendar; and it may be inferred, from the following poem, which certainly is ancient, that Ugnach was a distinguished hierophant in Arkite mysteries. If his station was Holyhead, it must follow, that this islet was a *Sëon* or *Sena* of the British Bards.—See Sect. II.

‡ Cwn Annwn, or *dogs of the deep,* a mystical representation of the white-robed Druids. So *Arawn,* the *Arkite,* King of the Deep, had his pack of *white dogs* with red ears. See Sect. V.

§ Attributes of the tauriform god, whom this priest represented.

‖ Taliesin's horse, named *Melyngan,* as we have already seen, was a sacred ship. See No. VII.

Gollew gweith y godriccawr,
Elhid bendith new a llawr!

At present, that is not my road—abstain from an injurious act, for the blessing of heaven and earth!

UGNACH.

Y gwr nim gwelas beunit,
Y tebic i gur deduit,
Ba hyd ei dy, a phan delit?

O thou who hast not often seen me—thou who resemblest one of the initiated, how long wilt thou absent thyself, and when wilt thou come?

TALIESIN.

Ban deuaw o Caer Sëon,
O imlat ac itewon,
I tau Caer Leu a Gwidion.

When I return from Caer Seon,* from contending with Jews, I will come to the city of Leu and Gwydion.†

UGNACH.

Dabrede genhiw i'r Dinas,
A thuit met ara phellas,
Ac eur coeth ar di wanas.

Come with me into the city, thou shalt have mead‡ which I have prepared, O thou with pure gold upon thy clasp.§

TALIESIN.

Mi nid aduen y gur hy,

---

* *Segontium*, near Caernarvon, was called Caer *Seiont*, from the river *Seiont* (Amnis Sagarum), being probably the place where the *Sëon*, or *Gallicenæ*, landed from Mona. The Sëon here mentioned was an isolated sanctuary —Sëon Tewdor—or representative of the ark. See No. X.

† The former of these was the father of the Diluvian patriarch. See Cadair Ceridwen, inserted in the third Sect. The latter was the British *Hermes*, often mentioned.

‡ The cup of initiation.

§ A trinket, which was viewed as the insigne of an adept.—*Aurdlws.*

A meteu tan y gveli—
Tec a chuec y dyuedi.

I know not the confident man, with his meads under his couch*—fair and courteous are thy words.

UGNACH.

Debre genhiw im tino,
A thuit gwin gorysgelho:
Ugnach yw vy heno, mab Mydno.

Come with me to my dwelling, and thou shalt have wine that briskly sparkles. Ugnach is my name, the son of Mydno.

TALIESIN.

Ugnach, bendith ith orset,
Athro rad ac enrydet!
Taliessin viw inheu, talaw iti dy gulet.

Ugnach, a blessing attend thy throne,† thou teacher of liberality and honour!—I am Taliesin, who will repay thy banquet.‡

UGNACH.

Taliessin, penhaw or gwir,
Beitat yng kert kyurgir,
Tric yma hyd dyv Merchir.

Taliesin, chief of men, thou victor in the contention of song, remain here till Wednesday.

TALIESIN.

Ugnach, moihav y alaw,
Ath ro rad y gulad penhaw:
Ny haetaw Kabit, ny thrigiaw.

Ugnach, the most affluent in riches, on thee may the supreme Ruler bestow his bounty! I merit not the booth—I may not stay.

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* The Παστος, or cell of initiation.

† Or seat of presidency, which Ugnach filled, as chief of his order.

By introduction into his Helio-arkite mysteries.

No. IX.

A Song, apparently composed by Merddin the Caledonian, in form of a Dialogue between himself and Taliesin, in which the Bard deplores the Persecution of the Druids.[*]

MYRDDIN.

Mor truan genhyf, mor truan
A dery am Kedwy a chavan!
Oed llachar kyvlavar cyvlavan.
Oed yscuid o Tryvrwyd, o truan!

How great my sorrow! How woful has been the treatment of *Kedwy*[†] and the boat! Unanimous was the assault, with gleaming swords. From the piercing conflict, one shield escaped.—Alas, how deplorable!

TALIESIN.

Oed Maelgwn a welwn, yn ymwan,
Y deulu, rac ter y uulu, ni thawan.

It was Maelgwn[‡] whom I saw, with piercing weapoues before the master[§] of the fair herd, his household will not be silent.

MYRDDIN.

Rac deuwr, yn nentur, y tiran:
Rac Errith a Churrith, y ar welugan.
Meinwineu, yn ddiheu, a ddygan.
Moch gweler y niver gan Elgan:
Och, oe laith, mawr ateith y deuthan!

Before the two personages, they land in the celestial circle*—before the passing form, and the fixed form† over the pale white boundary.

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[*] W. Archaiol. p. 48

[†] The Arkite goddess, whose appropriate emblem was the boat. In the days of Merddin, her votaries were exposed to a severe persecution.

[‡] The *Maglocunus* of Gildas.

[§] The tauriform god, or his chief priest.

The grey stones‡ they actually remove. Soon is Elgan§ and his retinue discovered—for his slaughter, alas, how great the vengeance that ensued!

TALIESIN.

Rys undant, oedd rychuant, y tarian.
Hyd attad y daeth rhad cyflawn.
Llas Cyndur, tra messur, y cwynan.
Llas haelon o ddynon, tra fuan
Trywyr nod, mawr eu clod, gan Elgan.

Thou that rushest forth, with one tooth (thou boar) thy shield has overwhelmed. To thee, complete liberality had been extended—Excessively is the slaughter of Cyndur deplored—Slain are three men,‖ who were liberal in their lives; even three eminent men, highly esteemed by Elgan.

MYRDDIN.

Trwy a thrwi, vug a rug, y daethan,
Traw a thraw, undoeth Bran a Melgan.
Llad Dyuel, oe diwed cyflafan,
Ab Erbin, ae werin, a wnaethan.

Through and through, wide and pointed, they came, advancing and surrounding the only wise Brân (raven), the son of Elgan. Dywal, the son of Erbin, with his retinue, did they slaughter in their last assault.

TALIESIN.

Llu Maelgwn, bu yscwn y daethan:

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* The circular temple, representing the zodiac, &c. It is also called *Cylch balch Nevwy*, the *magnificent celestial circle*, *Cylch byd*, the mundane circle, &c.

† Some symbols of the moon and sun.

‡ The persecutors of the Druids, it seems, amongst other acts of hostility, broke to pieces, or defaced, the sacred circles. This was deemed, by the votaries of the old superstition, a most heinous outrage. See No. XII.

§ The sacred ox, or his chief priest.

‖ These seem to have been *three attendant priests*.

Aerwyr cad, trybelidiad, gwaedlan.
Neu gwaith Arysderydd,
Pan fydd, y deunydd,
O hyd y wychydd,
Y darparan.

The host of Maelgwn, exulting, advanced: and severely did the embattled warriors pierce in the bloody inclosure. Even the battle of Arysderydd,* which is at hand, with the utmost energy will they prepare.

MYRDDIN.

Lliaws peleidrad, gwaedlad gwaedlan.
Lliaws aerwyr bryw breuawl Sidan.
Lliaws ban briwher:
Lliaws ban foher,
Lliaws eu hymchwel,
Yn eu hymwan.

A host of flying darts, in the bloody plain, prepare the banquet of gore. A host of warriors, destroy the tottering *Sidan*.† Many a festive horn is broken: many a horn-bearer is put to flight, whilst the host is forcing them back to promiscuous slaughter.

TALIESIN.

Seith meib Eliffer,
Seith gwyr, ban broffer,
Saith gwaew ni ochel,
Yn eu seithran.

The seven sons of Eliffer,‡ seven heroes, when put to the test, shun not the seven spears, in their seven stations.

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* Or *Arderydd*, in which the Northern establishment of the Druids was utterly ruined. See Sect. V. Merddin makes Taliesin prophesy of this calamitous event.

† The same, I suppose, as *Sidi* or *Sidin*, the Helio-arkite temple. See Sect. IV. This stanza seems to describe the fanatical battle of *Arderydd*.

‡ Surnamed *Gosgorddvawr*, with the great retinue. He was brother of Ceidiaw, Gwenddoleu's father.

MYRDDIN.

Seith tan ufelin,
Seith cad cyferbin,
Seithfed Cynfelin,
Y pob cinhvan.

Seven blazing fires will counteract seven battles: the seventh is Cynvelyn,[*] in the front of every mount.

TALIESIN.

Seith gwaew gowanon
Seith loneid afon,
O gwaed Cinreinon,
Y dylanwan.

Seven piercing spears shall fill seven rivers; with the blood of leading heroes shall they fill them.

MYRDDIN.

Seith ugein haelon
A aethan yg wllon;
Ynghoed Celiddon,
Y darfuan.
Canys mi Myrtin,
Gwedi Taliesin,
Bythawd cyffredin
Fy darogan.

Seven score liberal heroes are now become wandering spirits: in the forest of Caledonia,[†] they met their fate.

Since I, Merddin, am next after Taliesin, let my prophecy be received, in common with his.

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[*] Lord Belin, Dominus Sol. The name has been conferred upon some of his favourite priests and votaries. In this passage, the mystagogue seems to predict the re-establishment of his cause at some future period.

[†] Into which the remains of the Druid host retired for safety.

No. X.

A Song of Taliesin, called MARWNAD AEDDON O VÔN, *the Elegy of Aeddon*[*] *of Mona.*[†]

I.

Echrys ynys
Gwawd *Hu*, ynys
Gwrys Gobrettor;
Mon, mad gogeu,
Gwrhyd erfei,
Menei ei dôr.
Lleweis wirawd
Gwin a bragawd,
Gan frawd esgor.
Tëyrn wofrwy,
Diwedd pob rhwy,
Rhwyf rhewintor.
Tristlawn ddëon,
Yr Arch Aeddon,
Can rychïor,
Nid fu, nid fi,
Ynghemelrhi,
Ei gyfeissor.
Pan ddoeth Aeddon,
O wlad Wydion,
Sëon tewdor;
Gwenwyn pur ddoeth,

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[*] *Lord of the Din*—a title of the Helio-arkite god, who is styled *Cadarn Trydar, the mighty one of the Din.* No. V. and *Rhwyv Trydar, leader of the Din. Gododin.* He seems to have derived these names from the fanatical hymns and frantic shouts of his votaries, at the hour of his rising. The title is here transferred to his priest.

[†] See W. Archaiol. p. 70.

Pedair Peunoeth,
Meinoeth tymhor:
Cwyddynt gytoed;
Ni bu clyd coed,
Gwynt yn goror.
Math ag Eunydd,
Hudwydd gelfydd,
Rydd elfinor.
Ym myw Gwydion
Ac Amaethon,
Atoedd cynghor,
Twll tal y rodawg,
Ffyryf ffodiawg,
Ffyrf diachor:
Cadarn gyngres
Ei faranres,
Ni bu warth for.
Cadarn gyfedd,
Ymhob Gorsedd,
Gwnelid ei fodd.
Cu cynaethwy!
Hyd tra fyw fwy,
Crybwyllettor.

Disturbed is the island of the praise of Hu, the island of the severe remunerator; even Mona, of the generous bowls, which animate vigour—the island whose barrier is the *Menai*.

There I enjoyed the beverage* of wine and sweet liquor with a brother, who is now departed. The universal tyrant puts an end to every energy—the leader of destruction.

Deplorable is the fate of the ark† of Aeddon, since it is perceived, that there neither has been, nor will there be his equal, in the hour of perturbation.

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* Which was administered to the attendants at the sacred festival.

† The ark of the god, which was under the protection of his priest.

When Aeddon came from the land of *Gwydion*, into *Sëon* of the strong door,* a pure poison diffused itself for four successive nights, whilst the season was as yet serene. His contemporaries fell. The woods afforded them no shelter, when the winds arose in their skirts. Then *Mâth* and *Eunydd*, masters of the magic wand, set the elements at large: but in the living *Gwydion* and *Amaethon*, there was a resource of counsel, to impress the front of his shield with a prevalent form, a form irresistible. Thus the mighty combination of his chosen rank was not overwhelmed by the sea: and in every seat of presidency, the will of his

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* The ark; and hence the insulated fanes, sacred to Arkite mysteries. *Gwydion* was *Hermes*. His *land* may have been the old world, which was overwhelmed by the deluge; as it was his traditional office to conduct the dead into a region beneath the *abyss*.

In this passage, we have much Arkite mythology.

1. The patriarch came from the land of Hermes, or the old world.

2. He entered the inclosure of Sëon, or of the *nine sacred* damsels, which was guarded by a strong door, or barrier. This inclosure was the ark.

3. When he was shut up in this sanctuary, the *great supreme* (See No. III.) sent forth a poisonous vapour, to destroy the wicked world. To this bane, the Bards often allude. See *Cadair Ceridwen*, *Marwnad Dylan*, &c. But the messenger of death entered not the inclosure of Sëon. In the same strain of fable, Maelgwn is said to have retired into a church, to avoid the contagion of the yellow pestilence: here he would have been safe, had he not seen the demon of destruction through a small *hole in the door:* but the inclosure of Sëon was better secured.

4. By this pestilential vapour, which filled the whole atmosphere, the patriarch's wicked contemporaries were destroyed. But the earth was still polluted.

5. Then the great magicians, with their magic wands, set free the purifying elements: one of the effects of which, as described in the Triads, was the dreadful tempest of fire, which split the earth to the great deep, and consumed the greatest part of all that lived. W. Archaiol. V. II. p. 59. Upon this, the waters of Llyn Llion, or the abyss, burst forth.

6. These powerful agents would have destroyed the patriarch and his family in Caer Sëon, had not Hermes counselled him to impress a mystical form, or to strike a peculiar signal upon his shield. This, I suppose, had the same effect as the horrid din, with which the heathens pretended to save the moon, at the hour of her eclipse.

7. This device, together with the integrity of the just ones, preserved them from being overwhelmed by the deluge.

8. Hence, an imitation of these adventures became a sacred institution, which was duly observed in the mysteries, and conducted by the presiding priest.

mighty representative in the feast will be obeyed. The dear leader of the course—whilst my life continues, he shall be commemorated.

2.

Echrys ynys
Gwawd *Hu*, ynys
Gwrys gochymma.
Y rhag Buddwas,
Cymry ddinas
Aros ara;
Draganawl ben,
Priodawr, perchen
Ym Mretonia.
Difa gwledig,
Or bendefig,
Ae tu terra!
Pedeir morwyn,
Wedy eu cwyn,
Dygnawd eu tra.
Erddygnawd wîr,
Ar for, heb dir,
Hir eu trefra:
Oi wironyn,
Na ddigonyn
Dim gofetra.
Ceryddus wyf,
Na chrybwyllwyf
A'm rywnel da.
I lwrw Llywy
Pwy gwa harddwy,
Pwy attrefna!
I lwrw Aeddon,
Pwy gynneil Mon
Mwyn gywala?

Disturbed is the island of the praise of Hu, the island of the severe inspector. Before *Buddwas*,* may the community of the Cymry remain in tranquillity; he being the dragon chief, the proprietor, the rightful claimant in Britannia!

What shall consume a ruler† of the illustrious circle—is it a portion of earth? The four damsels‡ having ended their lamentation, have performed their last office; but the *just ones* toiled: on the sea which had no land, long did they dwell: of their integrity it was, that they did not endure the extremity of distress.

Yet still am I oppressed with sorrow, unless I commemorate my benefactor. In behalf of *Llywy*, who will now exercise restraint, who shall restore order! In behalf of *Aeddon*, who shall support Mona's benign associates!

No. XI.

An ancient Poem, called MARWNAD UTHYR PENDRAGON, *the Elegy of Uther Pendragon.*§

To the readers of Geoffrey of Monmouth, and his numberless copyists, the name of Uther Pendragon, the old

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* A title of *Hu*, who was venerated in the symbol of a huge serpent, and acknowledged as the supreme lord of Britain, where his chief priest governed as his vicegerent. See No. XI.

† The priest, who was considered as still living, *Orbe alio*, though his corporeal parts had been dissolved.

‡ *Gallicenæ, Gwyllion*, or *Sëon*. Those devoted priestesses, whose office it was, in the mysteries, to lament the supposed death of their god, as the Jewish women wept for *Tammuz*.

Here the Bard, as usual, digresses into his Arkite mythology.—The *just ones*, or Arkites, had been afflicted and tossed about upon the face of the deluge; but their integrity brought them to a safe harbour. The natural inference was, that this good priest, their votary, had also escaped from trouble. Notwithstanding this implied hope, the Bard is grieved for the departure of his benefactor, whose loss will be long felt by the fraternity of Mona.

§ The name implies *wonderful supreme leader*, or *wonderful chief dragon*.

King of the Britons, must be perfectly familiar. In this poem, however, he appears in the character of a heathen divinity, and his history is clearly referable to that of the deified patriarch.

In the former part of the piece, this divinity is personified by one of his priests, who recites part of the attributes and history of the pageant god: in the latter part, he is addressed by a sacrificing priest, with a prayer for the prosperity of Britain. The whole seems to have been taken from a mystical formulary.

1.

Neu fi liossawg yn trydar;
Ni pheidwn, rhwng deu lu, heb wyar.
Neu fi a elwir Gorlassar.
Fy ngwregys bu envys im hesgar.
Neu fi tywyssawg, yn nhywyll,
A'm rithwy am dwy pen kawell.
Neu fi, ail Cawyl, yn arddu,
Ni pheidiwn heb wyar rhwng deulu.
Neu fi, a amug fy achlessur,
Yn divant, a charant, casnur.
Neu'r orddyfneis i waed am wythur,
Cleddyfal, hydyr, rhag meibion Cawr Nur!
Neu fi a rannwys fy echlessur,
Nawfetran, yngwryd Arthur!
Neu fi a dorreis cant Caer:
Neu fi a leddais cant maer:
Neu fi a roddeis cant llen:
Neu fi a leddais cant pen:
Neu fi a roddeis, i Henpen,

The reader will recollect, that the titles of the Helio-arkite god have often been conferred upon his priests, and upon those princes who were favourites with the Druids and Bards.

See W. Archaiol. p. 72.

Cleddyfawr, gorfawr gynghallen,
Neu fi a oreu terenhydd—
Haearndor, edeithor pen mynydd.
Ym gwedduit im gofid,
  Hydyr oedd gyhir;
Nid oedd fyd na bei fy Eissillydd.
Mydwyf Bardd moladwy-anghywreint
Poet y gan vrein, ac eryr, ac wytheint—
Afagddu ae deubu ei gymaint,
Pan ymbyrth pedrywyr rhwng dwy geint.
Dringaw i nef oedd fy chwant,
Rhag eryr, rhag ofn amheirant.
Wyf Bardd, ag wyf telynawr,
Wyf Pibydd, ag wyf Crythawr,
Seith ugein cerddawr,
Dy gorfawr gyngallen.

Behold me, who am powerful in the tumultuous din; who would not pause between two hosts, without blood. Am I not called *Gorlassar*,* the *ætherial?* My belt has been a rainbow, enveloping my foe. Am not I a protecting prince in darkness, to him who presents my form at both ends of the *hive?* Am not I a plower, like *Kawyl?* Between two hosts I would not pause, without blood. Have not I protected my sanctuary, and, with the aid of my friends, caused the wrathful ones to vanish? Have not I shed the blood of the indignant, in bold warfare against the sons of the giant *Nûr?* Have not I imparted, of my guardian power, a ninth portion, in the prowess of Arthur? Have not I destroyed a hundred forts? Have not I slain a hundred governors? Have not I given a hundred veils? Have not I slaughtered a hundred chieftains?

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* There are many things worthy of remark in the character of this British Pantheos, as delineated by his priest and representative.

He is *lord of the din*, which, as we have seen, is a description of the Helio-arkite god: he is the god of war—the ætherial god—and the deity to whom the rainbow pertains; that is, the deified Noah. See *Cadair Ceridwen*.

He is a protector in darkness—a husbandman, like the Diluvian patriarch—a protector of the ark, and Arkite temples, like the sovereign ON. See No. IV.

He is the vanquisher of the Diluvian giants, the inspirer of heroism, and the president of mystic lore.

He gave the invincible sword to *Henben* (*the ancient chief*, some idolized monarch of early ages), and accomplished the purification of *Haearnddor*, Σιδηροθυρη, the ark, the same as Seon *Tewdor*, and Ynys *Pybyrddor*.

His state of affliction (during the deluge) was symbolized by an *ox* submitting to the yoke. He was the father of all mankind; and, as the great demon-god of the Bards, and their original instructor, he was skilled in all the mysteries of the order—being a Bard, a musician, and an enchanter. At the same time, he disliked the symbol of the eagle, which may have offended the Druids, when he displayed his wings on the Roman standard.

Did not I give to Henpen, the tremendous sword of the enchanter? Did not I perform the rites of purification, when *Haearndor* moved with toil to the top of the hill?

I was subjected to the yoke for my affliction; but commensurate was my confidence: the world had no existence, were it not for my progeny.

I am the Bard—as for the unskilful encomiast, may his lot be amongst ravens, and eagles, and birds of wrath! May utter darkness overwhelm him, when he supports the square band of men, between two fields!

It was my will to ascend into heaven from the eagle, to avoid the homage of the unskilful. I am a Bard: I am a master of the harp, the pipe, and the *crooth.* Of seven score musicians, I am the mighty enchanter.

2.

Bu calch fri friniad,
Hu, esgyll edeniad,
Dy fab, dy Feirddnad,
Dy Veir, Dewn dad—
- - - - Fy nhafawd,
I draethu marwnad,
Handid o meinad
Gwrthgloddiad byd.

Pryd Prydain, *Hu* ysgein, ymhwyllad.
Gwledig Nef, ynghennadeu nam doad!
Kein gyfeddwch,
Y am deulwch,
Llwch o'm plaid,
Plaid am gaer,
Caer yn ehaer,
Ry ys crifiad,
Virein ffo rhagddaw,
Y ar llen caw,
Mwyedig vein;
Dreig amgyffreu,
Odduch llëeu
Llestreu llad;
Llad yn eurgyrn,
Eurgyrn yn llaw,
Llaw yn ysci,
Ysci ymodrydaf,
Fur itti iolaf,
Buddig Veli,
A Manhogan, Rhi,
Ryeidwei deithi,
Ynys Fel Veli!

Privileged on the covered mount,* O *Hu* with the ex-

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* In this passage we may remark, 1. The titles and character of the god. 2. The character and office of the priest. And 3. The time and place where he performs his sacred function.

The god is named *Hu,* and the *glancing Hu,* who is described as having expanded wings: he is invoked as the *father* of the priest—he has the title of *Dëon, distributor,* and *Prydain, ruler of seasons:* he is the *gliding king,* that is, the *dragon,* who pursues the fair one—alluding to some such fable as that which represents Jupiter in the form of a dragon, as violating Proserpine, and by her becoming the father of Bacchus. See Myst. of the Cabiri, V. I. p. 208. He is also named the victorious *Beli,* that is, the *sun,* and adored as *lord* and *protector* of the British isle.

The priest describes himself as the son of the god—his Bardic proclaimer, or mystagogue, and his deputy governor. His office was to recite the death panded wings, has been thy son, thy Bardic proclaimer, thy deputy, O father Dëon: my voice has recited the death song, where the mound, representing the world, is constructed of stone work. Let the countenance of Prydain, let the glancing Hu attend to me! O sovereign of heaven, let not my message be rejected!

With solemn festivity round the two lakes; with the lake next my side; with my side moving round the sanctuary; whilst the sanctuary is earnestly invoking the gliding king, before whom the fair one retreats, upon the veil that covers the huge stones; whilst the dragon moves round, over the places which contain vessels of drink offering; whilst the drink offering is in the golden horns; whilst the golden horns are in the hand; whilst the hand is upon the knife; whilst the knife is upon the chief victim; sincerely I implore thee, O victorious Beli, son of the sovereign Man-Hogan, that thou wouldst preserve the honours of the HONEY island of Beli!*

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song, before the victim was struck—to invoke the god—to lead the mystical procession round the sacred lakes and the temple—to offer a libation with the horn of consecrated liquor; and then to take the knife and slay the victim.

These ceremonies are performed at a public and solemn festival, whilst the sanctuary, or assembly of priests and votaries, invoke the dragon king: and the place of celebration is on the sacred mount, within the stone circle and mound, which represented the world—and near the consecrated lakes.

At this time, the huge stones of the temple were covered with a veil, on which was delineated the history of the dragon king. There seems also to have been a living dragon, or serpent, as a symbol of the god, who is described as gliding from place to place, and tasting the drink offering in the sacred vessels.

* Britain, or the island of Beli, was also the island of *Hu,* No. X.: but *Hu* and *Beli* were the same.

No. XII.

An ancient Poem, entitled GWAWD LLUDD Y MAWR, *the Praise of Lludd the Great.*[*]

Lludd, or Llud, the son of Beli, is represented in our romantic chronicles, as the elder brother of Cassivellaunus, who fought with Julius Cæsar. His name does not occur in this very obscure poem, which is evidently the work of an obstinate heathen, and contains some curious traits of British mythology.

1.

Kathl goreu gogant,
Wyth nifer nodant,
Duw Llun dybyddant,
Peithiawg ydd ant;
Duw Mawrth yd rannant,
Gwyth yn ysgarant:
Duw Merchyr medant,
Ryodres, rychwant;
Duw Ieu escorant
Eiddiolydd anchwant;
Duw Gwener, dydd gormant,
Yngwaed gwyr gonovant;
Duw Sadwrn - - - - -
Duw Sul, yn geugant,
Dieu dybyddant,
Pum llong, a phum cant,
O'r anant oniant—
O Brithi Brith oi
Nu oes nu edi

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[*] W. Archaiol. p. 74.

Brithi brith anhai
Sych edi edi eu roi
Eil coed cogni,
Antaredd dymbi,
Pawb i *Adonai,*
Ar weryd *Pwmpai.*

A song of dark import was composed by the distinguished *Ogdoad,** who assembled on the day of the moon,† and went in open procession: on the day of Mars, they allotted wrath to their adversaries: on the day of Mercury, they enjoyed their full pomp: on the day of Jove, they were delivered from the detested usurpers: on the day of Venus, the day of the great influx, they swam in the blood‡ of men: on the day of Saturn - - - - - - on the day of the sun, there truly assemble five ships,§ and five hun-

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* It may be inferred, from the general tenor of the poem, that this *Ogdoad* consisted of the Diluvian patriarch and his family. They were, therefore, the same as *Sydyk* and his seven sons, the Cabiri, mentioned by Sanchoniatho; and the same as the sacred Ogdoad, or eight primitive gods of Egypt, who guided the ship of the sphere, thus making the ark an emblem of the system of the heavens. See Faber's Myst. of the Cabiri, V. I. pp. 56, 61, 76. Bryant's Analysis, V. II. p. 234.

† These supposed labours of the Diluvians seem to have been regarded as models of a Druidical festival, in which the various rites had their appropriate days.

‡ The accumulating deluge, which overwhelmed and dashed to pieces the inhabitants of the earth, is figuratively styled the *blood of men.* Sanchoniatho speaks of the blood of the primitive race, as being mixed with rivers and fountains.

§ Or, *five ships, with five hundred* men, embarked. These were wicked inhabitants of the old world, who being now terrified by the raging flood, approach the ark of the just man, and pray for protection.

Their prayer is in a foreign language, probably that of the mysteries which were introduced by *Coll,* the Cornish hierophant. Taliesin has elsewhere informed us, that the *spotted cat* of Mona, one of the idols which pertained to this superstition, was attended by men of a foreign language. We are also told by the same Bard, that the Druidical lore had been delivered in *Hebrew,* or *Hebraic.* See No XIII. And the words, *Adonai* and *Pompai,* which occur in the context, seem to imply, that this fragment has a near affinity to the Hebrew, or some of its dialects. In that language, the former of these terms signifies *lord;* and Mr. Bryant tells us, that *P'ompi* means *the oracle.*—Analysis, V. I p. 259.

Some idea of the purport of this passage may be collected from the context; and as it may serve to determine the important question, whether the Druids dred of those who make supplication—" *O Brithi Brith oi,* " &c. - - - - - - - O son of the compacted wood, " the shock overtakes me: we all attend upon *Adonai,* on " the area of *Pumpai.*"

2.

Darofyn darogan,
Gwaedd hir, rhag gorman:
Hir cyhoedd cynghan,
Cadwaladr a Chynan
Byd, buddydd bychan,
Difa gwres Huan.
Dysgogan Deruydd,
A vu auudydd,
Wybr Geirionydd,
Cerddawn a genhydd
Wylliawd, eil echwydd,
Yn nhorroedd Llynydd—
Ban beu llawn hydd;
Brython ar gynghydd,
I Vrython dymbi,
Gwred gwned ofri.
Gwedi eur ag eurynni,
Diffaith Moni a Llëeni,
Ac Eryri, annedd ynddi.
Dysgogan perffaith:
Annedd yn diffaith,

---

possessed sacred hymns in the *Phœnician* language, I shall attempt to write the lines in Hebrew characters, with the hope, that some good Orientalist may think them worthy of attention; and if they present the vestiges of Phœnician antiquity, do me the favour of correcting them.

ובריתי ברית עי
נו עץ נו הדי
בריתי ברית אני
סך הדי הדי הו רעי

Cymry pedeiriaith
Symudant eu haraith.
Yd y vi y vuch freith,
A wnaho gwynieith.
Meinddydd brefawd;
Meinhoeth berwhawd:
Ar dîr berwhodawr,
Yn llonydd yssadawr.

They implore the oracle with loud and continued cry, against the overwhelming.

In their public and united song, long had Cadwaladr and Cynan [*] declared to the unprofitable world, that the heat of the sun should be wasted. It was the presage of the Druid,[†] who earnestly attended in the æthereal temple of Geirionydd,[‡] to the songs of the Gwyllion, the children of the evening, in the bosoms of the lakes—"When the covert "shall be full,[§] when the Britons[||] shall be concealed together; then shall the Britons have an inclosure of great "renown. After the possession of gold and glittering "trinkets, Moni and Lleeni shall become desolate, and "Eryri (the heights of Snowdon) shall receive inhabitants."

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[*] *Cadwaladr, supreme ruler of battle*—a title of the Diluvian patriarch: *Cynan, the prince*—one of his sons. This passage implies some tradition of the *preacher of righteousness*: but how is his character perverted!

[†] The patriarch, as father and primary instructor of the Druids, is so styled by way of eminence. See No. IV. and XI.

[‡] The dominion of Gwair, the son of *Geiriawn, the word of justice,* otherwise called the son of *Gwestyl,* the great tempest. This Gwair was the Diluvan patriarch. See Sect. V. and App. No. III. Taliesin, the Arkite priest, was said to have dwelt upon the bank of the lake of Geirionydd. The patriarch is fabled to have had a temple, open to the sky, like the Caer Sidi of the Druids. The *Gwyllion,* or *Gwyllawd,* were the prototypes of Mela's *Gallicenæ.*

[§] This prophecy of the Gwyllion alludes to the ark, which was fabulously reported to have rested upon *Eryri,* or the heights of Snowdon. Such was the local appropriation of Diluvian history. See Sect. II, and III.

[||] As Bardic mythology placed the principal events of the Diluvian age within this island, so the patriarch and his family are emphatically styled *Brython.* Are we still to look for the origin of that name in Eastern mythology, and in the root ברה, whence ברית, and בריתון? The language of the Bard seems to favour that idea.

It is a perfect vaticination—There will be dwelling in the desart, and the Cymry of four dialects will change their speech—Then will come the spotted cow,* which shall procure a blessing. On the serene day will she bellow; on the eve of May shall she be boiled, and on the spot where her boiling is completed, shall her consumer rest in peace.

3.

Cathl gwae canhator,
Cylch Prydain, amgor.
Dedeuant, un gyngor,
I wrthod gwarthmor.
Boet gwir Venuit,
Dragwynawl byd,
Dolwys dolhwy Kŷd,
Dol aethwy eithyd,
Cynran llawn yt,
Cysarth cynud.
Heb eppa, heb henvonva,
Heb ovur byd,
Byd a fydd diffaith,
Diraid cogeu, tynghettor
Hoywedd trwy groywedd.

Let the song of woe be chaunted,† round the sacred

---

* Emblem of the ark—bellowing, before the deluge for its select company —then *boiled*, or tossed about by the flood, and finally consumed on the spot where the patriarch landed, and found rest.

† This division of the poem presents a tradition of Nimrod's rebellion, or of a subsequent dereliction of some principles, which the Druids deemed sacred. His customary honours had been withholden from the patriarch, who is here described as ruler of the sea, in allusion to his riding upon the deluge. He has the name of *Menwyd*, which, if it be British, seems to imply the *blessed*—he is the *dragon* chief of the world, or the universal patriarch and king, venerated under the symbol of a dragon—he is the fabricator of *Kyd*, or the ark, in which he traversed the waters of the abyss.

This ark was stored with corn: hence Ceres, her appropriate genius, as well as the British Ceridwen, was the goddess of corn; and, like the car of Ceres, the British ark was borne aloft by serpents, those favourite symbols of Helio-arkite idolatry.

The adversaries of Menwyd wished to remove or destroy three things—first, border of Britain! Men will assemble, with one purpose, to resist Gwarthmor (him who presided over the sea)—Let truth be ascribed to *Menwyd*, the *dragon chief of the world, who formed the curvatures of Kŷd, which passed the dale of grievous water, having the fore part stored with corn, and mounted aloft with the connected serpents.*

Without the *ape*, without the *stall of the cow*, without the *mundane rampart*, the world will become desolate, not requiring the cuckoos to convene the appointed dance over the green.

4.

Gwyr bychain bron otwyllyd,
Torwennawl tuth iolydd,
Hwedydd ar fedydd.
Ni wan cyllellawr
Meiwyr cleddyfawr.
Nid oedd uddu y puchyssyn:
Maw angerddawl trefddyn,
Ac i wyr caredd creuddyn,
Cymry, Eingyl, Gwyddyl, Prydyn.
Cymry cyfred ag asgen,
Dygedawr gwyddfeirch ar llyn.
Gogledd a wenwynwyd o Hermyn,

---

the *ape*. This animal the Egyptians held sacred to the god Apis (Bryant's Analysis, V. I. p. 335), who was Noah (Ib. V. *II*. p. 268), worshipped under the form of a bull. Ib. p. 418.

As the ape was not a native of Britain, or of any other Northern climate, it may be inferred, that the Druidism of this Bard was tinctured with the superstition of some Southern people.

The second object of persecution was the *stall of the cow*, or the cell which contained the symbol of the Arkite goddess; and the third was the *mundane rampart*, or circular temple, representing the great *belt*, which surrounds the world.

The fanatical Bard deems the *ape*, the *stall of the cow*, and the consecrated *circle*, of such importance, that he fancies the world would become desolate when they were destroyed; and in vain should the cuckoo proclaim the approach of the great festival in the beginning of May, with its solemn procession, and sacred dance. This dance is mentioned No. II. IV. and XIV.

O echlur, caslur, caslun,
O echen Addaf henyn,
Dygedawr trydw i gychwyn,
Branes o gosgordd gwyrein
Merydd miled Seithin.
Ar for angor a'r Cristin.
Uch o for, uch o fynydd,
Uch o for ynial, erbyn
Coed, maes, tyno a bryn.
Yd vi pob arawd
Heb erglywaw nebawd,
Crynhawg o bob mehyn.
Yd fi brithred,
Alliaws gynnired,
  A gofud am wehyn.
Yd fi dialeu,
Trwy hoyw gredeu,
  Goddi Dduw Urddin.

Men of little mind are partly misled by the worshipper of the white-bellied wanderer, the hunter of baptism.* The knife-bearer† shall not pierce the swordsmen of May.‡ They have not obtained their wishes—neither the ardently ambitious proprietor, nor the violent, blood-stained men, whether *Cymry, Angles, Gwyddelians,* or *North Britons.*

The Cymry, flying in equal pace with ruin, are launching their *wooden steeds* (ships) upon the water. The North has been poisoned by depredatory rovers, of pale and disgusting hue, and hateful form, of the race of Adam§ the Ancient, whom the flight of ravens has thrice compelled to change their abode, and leave the exalted society of Seithin[*] haunters of the watery plain.

---

* In this obscure passage, the Bard complains of the corruptors and persecutors of his religion.

† The Saxon; alluding to the affair at Stonehenge.

‡ The Britons; who carried arms in their mystical processions. See No. XIV.

§ A scoff at Scripture history. The Bards, forsooth, were not children of the *fallen Adam,* but of the *regenerate Noah.*

At sea, there is an anchor with the *Cristin*.[†] There is a cry from the sea, a cry from the mountain. From the tumultuous sea, the cry strikes the wood, the plain, the dale, and the hill.

There will be discordant speeches, to which none can attend, and inquiries from every quarter.

There will be a tumultuous flight, and abundant distress. There will be retaliation for wavering faith, purposed by the glorious god.

5.

Pell amser, cyn dydd brawd,
Y daw diwarnawd,
A dwyrein darlleawd
Terwyn tirion tir Iwerddon.
I Brydain, yna, y daw dadwyrein,
Brython o fonedd Rhufein.
Am bi barnodydd, o anghynres, dieu.
Dysgogan Sywedyddion,
Yngwlad y colledigion:
Dysgogan Derwyddon,
Tra môr, tra Brython,
Haf ni bydd hinon,
Bythawd breu breyron:
Ai deubydd ogwanfred,
Tra merin Tad Cêd.
Mil ym brawd Brydain Urddin
Ac yam gyffwn kyffin.
Na chwyaf yngoglud gwern
Gwerin gwaelodwedd Uffern;

---

[*] The patriarch—the Saturn of the Druids. See Sect. III.

[†] Professor of Christianity.

Ergrynaf cyllestrig caen,
Gan wledig gwlad anorphen.

Long before the day of doom,* shall the time arrive, when the East shall survey the fair borders of Erin's land.† Then shall Britain have a re-exaltation—Britons shall be delivered from the race of Rome; and I shall have judges, not banding together, but void of guile.

The diviners vaticinate in the land of those who have been lost.‡—Druids§ from beyond the sea—beyond the Northern Britons, predict a summer, in which the rain shall not cease. Then shall the great ones be broken—they shall have their feeble wanderings beyond the effusion of the father of *Kêd.*‖—The animal (Kêd) shall award to me the dignified Britain,¶ with its united boundaries.

And, lest I sink, adhesive to the quagmire** of that multitude, which peoples the depths of hell, I will tremble before the covering stone, with the sovereign of boundless dominion.

---

* The Druids had some idea of a day of doom: at least, the phrase often occurs in the most heathenish paragraphs of the ancient poems. Something of the same kind has been remarked in the tales of the Edda.

† As this is a pretended prophecy of the *Ogdoad*, we may suppose that the Bard alludes to certain events, which had occurred previous to his own age; and which he affected to regard as the accomplishment of the prophecy.

‡ Diviners of the primitive world, which had been overwhelmed by the deluge. He probably means the Ogdoad, who had prophesied before the flood.

§ These fanatics had established a seminary in the North, out of the reach of Roman arms. See Sect. V

‖ The Diluvian patriarch, who produced Kêd, the sacred ship. The Bard consigns his enemies to the bottom of the abyss.

¶ Or, re-establish the arch Druid, as supreme ruler of Britain. See No. I.

** Such was the British hell. The Bards tell us, it abounded with frost and snow, and was infested by a variety of noxious and loathsome animals.

No. XIII.

The Conclusion of Taliesin's ANGAR CYVYNDAWD.*

Ath gyfarchaf, fargad fardd.
Gwr yth gynnydd esgyrn niwl,
Cwddynt deu raiadr gwynt!
Traethator fyngofeg,
Yn Efrai, yn Efroeg.
Eilgweith ym rhithad.
Bûm glas gleisiad:
Bûm ci: bum hydd:
Bum Iwrch ym mynydd:
Bum cyff: bum rhaw:
Bum bwyall yn llaw:
Bum ebill yngefel,
Blwyddyn a hanner:
Bum ceiliawg brithwyn
Ar ieir, yn Eidin:
Bum Amws ar Re:
Bum tarw toste:
Bum bwch melynawr,
Mal y maethawr:
Bum gronyn erkennis,
Ef tyfwys ym mryn;
A mettawr am dottawr
Yn sawell, ym gyrrawr
Ymrygiaw o law,
With fy nghoddeidiaw.

---

* A translation of the former part, relative to the parentage and character of the British Apollo, is inserted in the *Celt. Res.* p. 553.

The extract which follows relates to the priest of that god, and recites the various characters he had sustained in his progress through the circle of transmigration, or the stages of initiation.

See W. Archaiol. p. 36.

A'm harfolles iar
Grafrudd, grîb escar.
Gorffwysseis naw nos,
Yn ei chroth, yn was.
Bum Aedd, aeduedig:
Bum llad, rhag gwledig:
Bum marw: bum byw;
Keing ydd ym eiddaw,
Bum i arweddawd,
Y rhagddaw bum tlawd.
A'm eil cynghores gres
Grafrudd: am rhoddes,
Odid traethator
Mawr molhator.
Mi wyf Taliesin;
Ryphrydaf iawn llin,
Parahawd hyd ffin,
Ynghynelw Elphin.

To thee, O Bard of the borders, I address myself; Mayest thou be advanced by him, whose bones were formed of mist, in the place where two cataracts of wind mingle together.

My lore has been declared in Hebrew, in Hebraic*—a second time was I formed. I have been a blue salmon: I have been a dog: I have been a stag: I have been a roebuck on the mountain: I have been a stock of a tree: I have been a spade: I have been an axe in the hand: I have been a pin in a forceps, for a year and a half: I have been a cock, variegated with white, upon hens, in Eidin: I have been a stallion upon a mare: I have been a buck of a yellow hue, in the act of feeding: I have been a grain † of the Arkites, which vegetated on a hill; and then the reaper placed me in a smoky recess, that I might be compelled freely to yield my corn, when subjected to tribulation. I was received by a hen,* with red fangs and a divided crest. I remained nine nights an infant in her womb. I have been Aedd,† returning to my former state. I have been an offering before the sovereign. I have died; I have revived; and, conspicuous with my ivy branch,‡ I have been a leader, and by my bounty I became poor.

---

* His lore, therefore, was not regarded as peculiar to the Druids of Britain.

† See the story called Hanes Taliesin, in the third Section of the preceding Essay.

Again was I instructed by the cherisher with red fangs. Of what she gave me, scarcely can I utter the great praise that is due. I am now Taliesin—I will compose a just string, which shall remain to the end of time, as a model to Elphin.

No. XIV.

A Poem, from the ancient MS. of Theophilus Jones, Esq.§ *It immediately follows Aneurin's Gododin, and is probably the Work of the same Author.*‖ *The Title, which seems to have consisted of two short Words, is wholly obliterated.*

1.

Aryf angkynnull,
Angkyman dull,
Twryf en agwed.

---

* This mystical *Hen*, as the reader has seen, was the Arkite goddess.

† This seems to have been a title of the Diluvian patriarch, or Helio-arkite god, with whom his priest claimed a mystical union.

‡ The heathen Britons crowned themselves with ivy branches, when they celebrated the mysteries of Bacchus.

§ See an imperfect copy, W. Archaiol. p. 21.

‖ The manifest intention of this poem, is to recommend to the Britons the use of arms. The Bard first of all recites the solemn custom of carrying them in the celebration of Bacchic rites: and then touches upon the calamitous fate of those British nobles, who laid aside their arms in their conference with Hengist.

Erac Menwed;
Erac mawrwed;
Erac maried;
Pan ys ty ern gwern,
Eam gam gyrn,
Eam gam gled,
E voli Ri,
Alluawr *Peithi*,
Peithliw racwed;
Yd y gweles,
Ar hual tres,
Tardei galled,
Dy gochwiawr,
A chloi, a phôr,
A pherth, a pher.
A rud uorua,
Ac ymorua,
Ac ewyonydd,
A gwynheidydd,
Kein edryssed.
Trybedawt rawt,
Rac y devawt,
Eil dal rossed:
Taryaneu bann,
Am dal hen bann,
By edryssed:
Blaid e vywyt,
Oed bleidyat ryt,
Eny dewred,
Pu bell peleidyr,
Pevyr, pryt neidyr,
O luch nadred.
Welyd yd wyt,
Gwelyd *in* rwyt,

Riein gared,
Carut vreidvyw,
Carwn dy vyw,
Vut heywred.
Cam hurawc darw,
Cwynaf dy varw,
Carut dyhed.
Baran mor, yg kynhoryf gwyr,
Y am gatpwll,
Ymwan Bran yg kynwyt.

Those who support no weapon, will have a lacerated form, when the tumult arises.

In the presence of the blessed ones;* before the great assembly; before the occupiers of the holme;† when the house‡ was recovered from the swamp, surrounded with crooked horns and crooked swords, in honour of the mighty king§ of the plains, the king with open countenance:—I saw dark gore arising on the stalks of plants, on the clasp of the chain,‖ on the bunches, on the sovereign, on the bush and the spear. Ruddy was the sea beach, whilst the circular revolution was performed by the attendants, and the white bands,¶ in graceful extravagance.

The assembled train were dancing, after the manner, and singing in cadence, with garlands** on their brows: loud was the clattering of shields, round the ancient cauldron, in frantic mirth: and lively was the aspect of him, who, in his prowess, had snatched over the ford,* that involved ball, which casts its rays to a distance, the splendid product of the adder, shot forth by serpents.

---

* *Menwed,* which is of the same import as *Menwyd,* a title of the Diluvian patriarch. No. XII.

† The insular stall of the sacred ox, or tauriform god.

‡ The shrine, drawn forth by the sacred oxen.

§ *Hu,* the Helio arkite god, the British Bacchus.

‖ The chain here mentioned, was that of the sacred oxen—the *bunches* or *knobs* belonged to their collar. See No. III. The *sovereign* was the god himself, or the priest who personated his character: and the *spear* was the *thyrsus,* which probably carried something of a *Phallic* allusion.

¶ The Druids, who led the circular dance.

** Dionysius informs us, that the British bacchanals were crowned with garlands of ivy.

But wounded art thou, severely wounded, thou delight of princesses, thou who lovedst the living herd! It was my earnest wish that thou mightest live, O thou of victorious energy! Alas, thou BULL, wrongfully oppressed, thy death I deplore. Thou hast been a friend of tranquillity!

In view of the sea, in the front of the assembled men, and near the pit of conflict, the raven has pierced thee in wrath!

2.

Tardei donn,
Gyvryngon:
Gowydawc byt,
Ef gwrthodes,
Ar llwyth peues,
Ar lles pedyt,
Pedwar lliwet,
Petwar milet,
Miledawrbyt.
Aessawr yn nellt;
A llavyn eg wallt,
Un o bedror:

---

* The same fable, respecting the acquisition of the Anguinum, which is related by Pliny—

Prætera est ovorum genus in magnâ Galliarum famâ, omissum Grœcis. Angues innumeri æstate convoluti, salivis faucium, corporumque spumis, glomerantur; Anguinum appellatur. Druidæ sibilis id dicunt in sublime jactari sagoque opportere intercipi, ne tellurem attingat. Profugere raptorem equo: serpentes enim insequi, donec arceantur amnis alicujus interventu, &c.

Hist. Nat. L. XXIX. c. 3

As the person who had acquired this prize was styled a *bull*, it may be conjectured, that it was his privilege to represent the tauriform god in the solemn procession.

Gwr gwyllyas,
O gyrn glas,
  Med meitin,
Gwr *teirn* vawr,
O blith porphor,
  Porthloed bedin.
Brëein Tutvwlch
Baranret dost,
  Bengwaed gwin:
Yr med a fawryf,
Yd aethant aeryf,
  Dros eu hawfin;
Gwyalvan weith,
Er cadw kyvreith,
  Bu kyvyewin.
Kynan kenon
Teithvyw o Von,
  Ar vreint gorllin:
Tutvwlch kyvwlch,
A oreu vwlch,
  Ar vann caereu.
Gan Vynydawc,
Bu atveillyawc
  Eu gwirodeu.
Blwyddyn hiraeth
Er gwyr Catraeth,
  A'm maeth, ys meu—
Eu llavneu dur—
Eu med, eu bur,
  Eu hualeu—
Aryf angkynnull,
Angkyman dull,
  Twryf neus kigleu!

And now a wave[*] bursts forth from the central region: the afflicter of the world refused, from the inhabitants of the land, and for the benefit of his train, four multitudes,[†] and four that were resigned, to the chace of the universal hunter.

The shield is split into lath;[‡] but his blade descends on the head of one selected[§] from the quadrangle—of that man who, even now, had been pouring mead from the blue horns, the great ruler, enveloped in purple, the supporter of the army.

The dignified Tudvwlch had attended the woful assembly, in which blood was mixed with wine—in which they who freely regaled with mead, drank of the cup of slaughter, amidst their excess; and the inclosure that had been wattled, for the preservation of law, became full of confusion.

The princely Cynan had journeyed from Mona, to support the privilege of the higher order: Tudvwlch, the batterer, had made breaches in the bastions of forts: hence the destruction they found, in their banquet with Mynyddawg.[‖]

For the men of Catraeth, my supporters, I have borne a year[¶] of sorrow. Their steel blades—their mead—their

---

[*] This *wave* was Hengist and his Saxons. The imagination of the Bards was so wholly engrossed by their Diluvian lore, that they borrowed most of their imagery from it.

[†] The inhabitants of those districts which Vortigern had assigned to Hengist.

[‡] When Hengist advised, that shields should be excluded from the place of conference, as useless and inconvenient in a friendly assembly, he seems to have hewn his own shield into splinters, by way of enforcing his argument. Aneurin, in the Gododin, speaks of his leaving at a distance the shield that was split into lath.

[§] *Tudvwlch,* whom Hengist selected for his own victim, and for that purpose placed next to him at the feast. The fate of this prince is deplored in the songs of the Gododin.

[‖] *The mountain chief*—Vortigern the Venedotian, as in the Gododin.

[¶] Hence it appears, that this poem was composed *a year* after the massacre of the nobles at Stonehenge, or about A. D. 473. Aneurin had witnessed the horrid scene, and the groans of the dying still sounded in his ears.

violence—their assortment in pairs!—Those who carry no weapons, have their form lacerated—Do I not still hear the tumult!

No. XV.

Amongst the most curious productions of the ancient British muse, we may class those little poems, which are called *Gwarchanau, charms,* or *talismans;* or else *Gorchanau, incantations.* In addition to the general lore of Druidism, these pieces bring forward certain mystical amulets, which were delivered to the patriotic warriors, as infallible pledges of the protection of the gods; and which were evidently remains of the renowned magic of the Britons. The language of these compositions is of difficult construction, and the subject, as might be expected, mysterious and obscure. Nevertheless, as an exhibition of them may be deemed essential in the exposure of our national superstition, I shall present the reader with the originals, from the oldest known MS. together with a close translation, and a few explanatory notes.*

GWARCHAN ADEBON.

Ex vetusto codice membranaceo Theoph. Jones, Armig.

Ny phell gwyd aval o avall.
Ny chynnyd dyual a dyvall.
Ny byd ehovyn noeth en ysgall,
Pawb, pan ry dyngir, yt ball.

---

* There are three of these pieces preserved; but I shall reserve the *talisman of Cunobeline,* till I offer some remarks upon the old British coins.

A garwn y ef carei anreithgar!
Ny byd marw dwyweith,
Nyt amsud y vud e areith!
Ny cheri gyfofni gyvyeith.
Emis emwythwas amwyn;
Am swrn, am gorn kuhelyn,
En adef tangdef, collit.
Adef led, buost lew en dyd mit.
Kudvyt keissyessyt keissyadon.
Mein uchel, medel e alon,
Dyven ar warchan Adebon.

THE TALISMAN OF ADEBON.*

The apple will not fall far distant from the tree. The sedulous cannot prosper in company with the remiss. All those who are not intrepid, when exposed naked amongst thistles, will fail when adjured.

Should I love him who could become the friend of the spoiler! The man who cannot die twice, will govern his speech, as if he were dumb. It was not thy disposition to put thy countrymen in fear. The fierce youth treasured up the gem of protection; yet for a trifle, for the horn of the stranger, in disclosing the word of peace, he was lost. Indirect was thy answer, and thou hast been brave in the day of battle. Concealed was that information which the inquirer sought—the dweller amongst the high stones,† the reaper of his foes, smiled upon the talisman of Adebon.

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* In this little poem, the mystagogue discriminates between those probationers who duly preserved the secrets with which they were entrusted, and those who were tempted by any consideration whatever to divulge them. To the latter, it seems, the protecting talisman would be of no avail.

† In the original—*high stones, the reaper of* HIS *foes.* This is an elliptical phrase, implying the god who inhabited the temple, constructed of high stones.

No. XVI.

GWARCHAN MAELDERW. *Ex eodem.*

That the reader may form some idea of the nature of this very obscure and mysterious poem, he must suppose that some great public calamity had recently befallen the Britons—the same, apparently, which Aneurin deplores in his Gododin. Upon this occasion, the *Archimagus,* in order to guard in future against such fatal accidents, devises a magical *flag* for the leader of the native forces. He is now in the mystic cell, giving direction to his attendants for the completion of this great work, and intermixing some hints for the conduct of a good general, with allusions to the history of his times.

1.

Doleu deu ebyr am gaer,
Ymduhun am galch, am glaer—
Gwibde a doer adwy aer.
Clodryd keissidyd kysgut:
Brithwe arwe arwrut,
Ruthyr anoothwe, a uebir:
Adwy a dodet ny debit.
Odef ynyas dof y wryt:
Dygwgei en aryf, en esgut;
Hu tei, en wlyd elwit.

1.

In the dales where the courses surround the Caer,* HE † arouses, who is partly covered and partly bright—soon shall the breach ‡ of slaughter be repaired.

---

* I retain the original word, which implies a *circle,* or *circular temple,* as well as a military fortress.

† *Hu,* the Helio-arkite god, who is repeatedly mentioned in the poem.

‡ The great massacre which had been recently perpetrated.

Let the renowned, the enterprising,* be lulled in sleep; and with speed let the variegated web † of heroism, with unbroken threads, be woven—the breach which has been made shall not furnish a passage.

Train up his valour to endure the toil of conflict: let him frown in arms, expert and active; but let Hu mildly warm him with his divine presence! ‡

2.

Gwr a ret pan dychelwit,
Kywely krymdy, krymdwyn.
Kyueiliw, nac eiliw etvrwyn.
Nac emmel dy dywal a therwyn!
Terwyn torret, tec teithyawl,
Nyt aruedauc e volawt.
Dyffryderas y vrascawt,
Molawt rin rymidhin, rymenon.
Dyssyllei trech tra Manon,
Disgleiryawr, ac Archawr, Talachon;
Ar rud Dhreic, Fud Pharaon,
Kyueillyawr, en awel, *adawavn*.

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* These epithets may be referred to *Eidiol*, or *Ambrosius*, whose actions are recorded in the Gododin. His sleep seems to have succeeded to the toils of the fatal morning.

† Notwithstanding the extraneous matter that is interspersed throughout the poem, the great enterprise of the Bard is the construction of this *web of heroism*. We learn the following particulars respecting it. The figure of the leader of the army is interwoven in the work, together with those of *Hu*, or the sun, and of the red dragon.

It is described as *Brascawd, Magnum Sublatum*, a *huge, raised* (standard), the glory of the great field of battle, which was to accompany the army, flying in the breeze.

There was a flowing streamer attached to it, interwoven with the threads of *wrath*, and it was regarded as possessing a miraculous power of protection from military disgrace. By these circumstances, I deem myself justified in styling it a *magical flag, or standard,* though the Bard has not expressly introduced the phrase.

‡ These directions, as well as some of the same kind which occur in the next paragraph, manifestly refer to the delineation of the commander, upon the web of heroism: and the Bard expresses himself, as if he imagined that the disposition of the figure must influence the conduct and fortunes of the man.

2.

' The man who rushes forth, when the foe lie in ambush, is the bedfellow of him who rests in the narrow house, under the tumulus.—Let him have the habit, but not the disposition of the over-cautious.[*]

Mix not thou the cruel with the brave! If the brave be broken, fair is his unblemished character—his fame is not carried away.

I have devised a huge standard—the mysterious glory of the great field of battle, and its excessive toils. There the victor directs his view over *Manon*,[†] the *luminary*, the *Arkite* with the lofty front, and the *red dragon*, the *Bûdd* (victory) of the *Pharaon (higher powers)*—it shall accompany the people,[‡] flying in the breeze.

3.

Trengsyd a gwydei neb ae eneu,
Y ar orthur teith teth a thedyt,
Menit e osgord, mavr mur onwyd.
  Ar vor ni dheli
Na chyngwyd, gil, na chyngor.
Gordibleu eneit talachor;
Nyt mwy ry uudyt y esgor,
Esgor eidin rac dor.
Kenan, kein mur e ragor,
Gossodes ef gledyf ar glawd Meiwyr.

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[*] That is—Let him be circumspect, but not pusillanimous. There seems to be more sober, good sense in the maxims of this paragraph, than what usually falls to the lot of a conjuror.

[†] Mr. Owen renders *Manon*, a *paragon of beauty*, a *goddess*. The word is, in this passage, connected with the masculine epithets, *Disgleiriawr*, the *luminary*, and *Archawr*, the *Arkite*. It is, therefore, a manifest title of the Helio-arkite divinity, whom the Bard also styles *Talachon*; which I interpret, *with the lofty front*: but the term may be of foreign origin, and imply *Tal Chan, Sol Rex*.

[‡] *Adav-awn, united hands*: it is, perhaps, an error of the copyist for *Advaön*, the *people*.

3.

He should have perished! Even he who brought down ruin with his mouth,* by causing the army to halt on the march, when the ranks were drawn out, and his effective train was as a huge wall, mounted with ashen spears.

In the fluctuating sea,† thou canst mark neither co-operation, design, nor counsel—the front of the circling mound protects their lives; but no more can they extricate themselves, nor be delivered, before the barrier of Eidin. Kenan, the fair bulwark of excellence, set his sword upon the rampart of the celebrators of May.

4.

Budic e ren eny:
Annavd Wledic,
Y gynnwithic,
Kynlas kynweis,
Dwuyn dyvynweis.
Kychuech ny chwyd kychwerw.
Kychwenyches,
Kychwenychwy Enlli weles,
A lenwis, miran mir edles,
Ar ystre, gan vore godemles,
Hu tei, idware yngorvynt—
" Gwyr goruynnaf, ry annet,
En llwrw rwydheu ry gollet"—
Collwyd, medwyt menwyt.

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* *A gwyddei nêb ae eneu—who made a fall with his mouth.* This sarcasm is evidently aimed at Vortigern, who checked the ardour of his victorious forces, upon the second landing of Hengist, and ratified a friendly *convention* with the Saxons, as I have already observed in the notes upon the Gododin. From this circumstance, the British prince obtained the opprobrious epithet, *Gwrtheneu, of the ill-omened mouth.*

† Alluding to the votaries of Druidism, who were thrown into the utmost confusion by the sudden massacre which took place, whilst they were celebrating the solemnities of May; and with difficulty protected their lives within the mound of the great temple, till Kenan, the *prince,* that is, Eidiol, or Ambrosius, rallied them from their consternation, and planned the means of defence. *See the Gododin.*

4.

Beneficent was the exertion of the supreme—the sovereign inclosed, for the unadvised, grey-headed chief ministers, who devised deep counsels.

The mixture of sweet[*] will not produce the mutually bitter—I have joined in the common wish, the general wish of those who saw Enlli,[†] filled with the fair aspect of returning prosperity, in the sacred course, on a serene morning, when *Hu* sent forth his dancing beams, making this demand—" I require men *to be born again*,[‡] in consideration of those liberal ones who will be lost!"—Those blessed ones —they have been intoxicated and lost!

5.

Gogled Run, Ren, ry dynnit!
Gorthew, a'm dychuel, dychuelit,
Gorwyd mwy galwant no melwit.
Am rwyd, am ry, ystof lit,
Ystof lit llib llain.
Blin, blaen, blen blenwyd.
Trybedavt y wledic,
E rwng drem Dremrud:
Dremryt, ny welet y odeu, ddogyn ryd:
Ny welet y odeu dhogyn fyd,
Mor eredic—Dar digeryd,
Kentaf digonir Kanwelw,
Kynnwythic lleithic llwyrdelw,
Kyn y olo Goundelw,
Taf gwr mawr y wael Maelderw.

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[*] That is, the unanimous counsel of the hoary Druids.

[†] The island of Bardsea, which was sacred to the mysteries of the Helio-arkite god, whom the Bard feigns to have foretold the recent calamity by an oracle, accompanied with a prophecy of returning prosperity. This Druidical fraud must have been very seasonable in the days of *Aneurin*.

[‡] The original is *ry annet;* but I think my translation is accurate: it is usual, in this ancient copy, to double the *n*, where the preceding vowel is long; thus *cann* for *cân*, *gwynn* for *gwyn*, &c.

5.

Is it the Northern Rhun,[*] O thou supreme, that thou drawest forth! The gross chief,[†] who has returned to me, shall be forced to retrace his steps—For steeds they call, more than for the circling mead.

In the network [‡] which surrounds the sovereign, dispose thou the threads of wrath. Dispose wrath in the flowing streamer. Irksome in front be the glance of the radiant presence![§] Let the sovereign stand firm, amongst the rays of the *ruddy glancer*—the ruddy glancer, whose purpose cannot be viewed in perfect freedom—whose purpose cannot be viewed, in a state of security, by those who plow the sea.

By a shout[‖] which cannot be disparaged, the chief of pale and livid aspect—even he whose throne is involved in utter confusion, will be first convinced, before Gounddelw[¶] (the white image) is covered, that Maelderw (the proficient of the oaks) is a mighty operator.

6.

Delwat dieirydaf
Y erry par, ar delw
Rwysc rwyf bre,
Rymun gwlat,
Rymun rymdyre.

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[*] Probably the son of Einion. This Rhûn lived in the fifth century, and was styled one of the three haughty chiefs of Britain. He was the grandson of *Cunedda*, whose patrimony was in Cumberland and *North* Britain.

[†] Hengist, who had returned to Britain: his gross bulk is taken notice of by Cuhelyn and Aneurin.

[‡] The Bard returns to his *web of heroism*. The *threads of wrath* seem to denote some colour which was hoisted, when the army neither gave nor received quarter.

[§] The phrases—*radiant presence*, and *ruddy glancer*, must be referred to the Helio-arkite divinity, the patron of the pagan Britons.

[‖] This seems to allude to the shout of determined vengeance, described in the Gododin, *Song* 15.

[¶] I understand this as the name of the magical standard.

Ysgavl dhisgynnyawd wlawd gymre;
Nac ysgawt, y redec, ry gre.
Godiweud godiwes gwlat vre;
Ny odiweud o vevyl veint gwre.

6.

I will immortalize the form of him who brandishes the spear, imitating, in his career, the ruler* of the mount, the pervader of the land, by whose influence I am eminently moved. With active tumult did he descend to the ravine between the hills; nor did his presence form a running shadow.

Whatever fate may befal the lofty land, disgrace shall never be the portion of this assembled train!

Here *Gwarchan Maelderw* concludes. What follows in the Archaiologia, consists of various fragments of the Gododin, and other pieces of the sixth century. In the ancient *MS.* from which I copy, these detached scraps are properly separated from the preceding poem, and from each other, by large capital initials.

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* The solar divinity, who, as we are here told, paid the Bard an extraordinary visit in the mystic cell.

END OF THE APPENDIX.

REMARKS

UPON

Ancient British Coins.

BEFORE I dismiss the subject of Druidism, it may not be improper to take some notice of those singular coins, which have been ascribed to the ancient Britons, and examine how far the design of the engraver harmonizes with that national superstition, which has been transmitted to us by the Bards and mythological Triads.

It is known to most readers, that these coins have been published, as *British*, by Camden and his editors, by Dr. Borlase, and other learned antiquaries; that repeated attempts have been made to explain them, and that, notwithstanding this, the peculiarity of their drawing has not been satisfactorily accounted for.

The reason of this difficulty, as it appears to me, is simply this: the earliest coins of the Britons, like those of most other nations, are impressed with *religious*, rather than with civil or military devices; and the imagery of their national superstition has not been hitherto understood by our medallists.

That these coins are genuine monuments of some nations who occupied ancient Britain, cannot be matter of doubt to the candid critic. They are often found in various districts of this island, and in no other country. It is observed, that they have a remote similarity to some old Gaulish coins, and yet retain a style and character of their own, sufficient to mark them as the property of a distinct people. This is just what might be expected, supposing that they are British, as our ancestors originally sprung from the same stock as the Gauls, with whom they maintained a religious intercourse to the very æra of the Roman conquest, though they had been for many ages locally and politically distinct from them. And lastly, Camden and his editors have shewn, that many of these coins bear the names of British princes and cities, which are well known in history. And the style and character of the pieces thus ascertained to be British, as well as the figures with which they are charged, unite them indisputably with certain more rude and uninscribed specimens, and prove them to have been the property of the same people.

As to the antiquity of these monuments, it may be remarked, that those which are inscribed with legends, generally present the names of princes who are known to have lived in the century immediately preceding the birth of Christ, or in the first century of our present æra:—as *Cassivellaunus, Cunobelinus, Caractacus, Arviragus, Boadicia,* &c. And these have not only inscriptions in Roman characters, but also display a comparative degree of elegance in the design and execution. Here we may imagine the *drawing* of the Briton corrected by the Roman artist: and this series commences with *Cassivellaunus,* who was contemporary with Julius Cæsar.

Upon the uninscribed coins, we generally perceive figures of the same kind; but they exhibit a drawing comparatively rude and uncouth: hence it is reasonable to infer, that they are of somewhat higher antiquity than the more finished specimens; and that they were struck sometime before the Roman invasion; and consequently, were the production of ages, during which the Britons were independent, and their religious and political establishments as yet continued to subsist.

To him who is advanced a single degree in the study of antiquity, the symbols of heathen superstition upon several of these coins, must present themselves at the first glance. We have here the figures of the *sun* and *moon,* well-known objects of British devotion; the figure of *Janus,* the *Saidi* of the Britons; the figure of *Apollo* with his harp, or the *Beli* and *Tydain* of the same people; with many others equally decisive. Several specimens also present masks of different shapes, implying the mysterious nature of the subject. Hence it may be conjectured, that the Britons did not intend these pieces for the common medium of trade, but that they were struck in honour of their gods, in commemoration of the solemnities of their great festivals, and upon other sacred occasions.

Upon the sacred medals of the Greeks and Romans, we often find the elevation of magnificent temples, stately porticoes, or elegant altars.

The Britons could display nothing in this style of magnificence: but, if I mistake not, they have taken care to exhibit something that more immediately connects their medals with their national superstition. We here find large *studded circles*, occupying a considerable part of the field; and these are often concentric with other plain circles, so that they give exact representations of those heathenish temples, which abound in this island, and which generally consist of a circle of massy stones, either surrounded by a bank of earth, or else inclosing such a bank.

It may also be worthy of remark, that the curious gold coins published by Dr. Borlase, were discovered in the hill of *Karn-brê*, a place remarkable for its assemblage of almost every species of monument pertaining to British superstition. The learned author describes these monuments at large, and then recapitulates their names, as follows:

" In this hill of Karn-brê, then, we find *rock-basons*, " *circles*, *stones erect*, remains of *Cromlêhs*, *Carns*, a *grove* " *of oaks*, a *cave*, and an *inclosure*, not of *military*, but " *religious* structure: and these are evidences sufficient of " its having been a place of Druid worship; of which it " may be some confirmation, that the town, about half-a- " mile cross the brook, which runs at the bottom of this " hill, was anciently called *Red-drew*, or, more rightly, " *Ryd-drew*, i. e. the *Druid's Ford*, or crossing of the " brook." (*Antiq. of Cornwall*, p. 120.)

Would it be an unreasonable conjecture, that the gold which was carefully concealed in the centre of this consecrated spot, and which bore evident marks of Druidical superstition, had belonged to the Druids of Karn-brê hill, and had been there deposited, when the order were compelled to consult their safety by a precipitate flight?

These pieces, it is true, must have been some of their most portable property; but if, like the *glain* and the *egg*, they were viewed as badges of the order, which, if found upon them, would expose them to the fury of their enemies; or if the devices upon them were regarded as magical and talismanic, we need not be at a loss to assign the reason why they should have been left behind.

These hints are not thrown out gratuitously. There exists considerable evidence, that the Britons had certain pieces of gold and silver, which they viewed in the several lights here suggested, and which answered the description of several of these coins.

I have shewn at large, that the Welsh people, in the time of their native princes, and even in more recent ages, religiously kept up an imitation of the customs and institutions of their remote progenitors: and here a custom presents itself, which seems to intimate the real use of some of these ancient pieces.

Mr. Owen, in his Dictionary *V. Arian dlws,* takes notice of certain *silver medals,* which were given as the reward of merit to the victors in poetical competition, and also in public sports or games; and observes, that the prize for poetry was marked with a figure of a *chair;* and for music, with that of a *harp.*

Thus, the medal awarded to each candidate bore a symbol of the art, in which he had distinguished himself; and was therefore carefully preserved by him, as a memorial of the honour which he had acquired. Hence we may infer, that those pieces which bore an impression of the gods and temples of the Druids, were regarded as badges of Druidical honours.

Taliesin, who, upon all occasions, is ambitious of proving himself a worthy successor of the primitive Druids, seems repeatedly to hint that this was actually the case. Thus he says—"With the circle of ruddy gems upon my golden "shield, do I not preside over the area of blood, which is "guarded by a hundred chiefs?"*

Here we find the splendid shield was the appropriate badge of the chief Druid: and what can be implied by the *studded circle* upon the shield of the Helio-arkite god and of his priest, unless it was an image of *Caer Sidi,* the celestial zone, and the circular temple—the same, in fact, which appears upon several of these coins?

Again—in the same poem, the Bard exhibits a piece of gold, as the credential of his order and distinguished rank. "With my golden precious device upon my piece of gold, "lo, I am that splendid one, who sportively come from the "invading host of the Feryll."

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* Appendix, No. VII.

The piece of gold seems to have been ostentatiously worn, as the public *insigne* of this heathen priest; for he is thus addressed in another poem—"Come with me into the "city, and thou shalt have mead which I have prepared, "O thou, with the *pure gold upon thy clasp!*"*

More passages to the same purpose might be adduced; but, for the present, I leave it to the consideration of the reader, whether these hints do not furnish a just presumption, that some of the singular pieces which still remain, were a kind of honorary medals, which the Druids distributed amongst their disciples, according to their respective ranks and attainments: and if this be admitted, it will follow, that they were not designed as the medium of trade.

I shall, in the course of this Essay, produce some evidence, that certain pieces of gold or silver, which answer the description of several of these old coins, were also regarded as *charms* or *talismans*, and as such delivered to those votaries of Bardism, who took up arms when the Druids sanctified war, for the defence of the country.

But, first of all, let us attentively consider some of the extravagant images which appear upon these reliques of antiquity. Let us select the figure of the horse, upon one of the Karnbrê coins, which Dr. Borlase thus describes.

"No. XVI. *(see the annexed plate)* is the best preserved "coin, as well as largest and most distinct, which I have "seen of the gold coins found in Cornwall. The profile is "well proportioned, and neither destitute of spirit nor "expression: and it is somewhat surprising, that an artist, "who could design the human face so well, should draw "the horse so very indifferently on the other side. The "head has two rows of curls above the laureated diadem, "and the folds of the garment rise up round the neck, close "to the ear. The reverse, a *horse*, a *wheel*, *balls* and *crescents*, as in the rest; it weighs four pennyweights and "fourteen grains."

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* Appendix, No. 8.

Our author seems to impute the deviation from nature, in the figure of this horse, to the want of skill in the artist. But I think it impossible to suppose, that the person who drew and executed the human head, with its complex ornaments, should have wanted ability to delineate the more simple form of the animal with accuracy and neatness, had that been his real design.

Instead of this, we here find a *horse* with the head and beak of a *bird*, a body bent downwards in the shape of a *boat*, and little groups of *balls* and *leaves* substituted for legs. It is therefore evident, that something more is here intended, than the mere delineation of a horse.

That the British artists were capable of marking out their design with a certain degree of precision, may also be inferred, from a comparison of this coin with other specimens in the same series. Thus in No. XX. *(see the annexed plate)*, we have the same monstrous figure struck from another die; and wherever the figure, called the *horse*, can be traced upon the Karn-brê coins, he constantly presents the head of a *bird*, and the body of a *boat*.

This grotesque singularity, in such a variety of specimens, cannot be wholly ascribed to the rudeness of the designer's art, or to the accidental wandering of an unpracticed hand. Such an uniform departure from the simplicity of nature, must have been the effect of choice, and therefore intended to convey some determinate meaning.

In this favourite figure, then, we are to view some complex symbol, some representation of a group of ideas, which the designer had in contemplation. We must seek for the subject of this symbol in the *civil*, the *military*, or the *religious* affairs of the British people; and, as I have already hinted, we shall find it only in the latter department: for as the symbols upon the British coins allude to religion in general, so they have a particular reference to that *Helio-arkite* superstition, which we have already discovered in the ancient Bards and mythological Triads.* And I cannot regard the most prominent figure on these coins, namely, the monstrous *horse*, with the *head of a bird* and the *body*

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* Hence the figures of the *sun* and *moon*, the frequent repetition of *Apollo* and his harp, the *spica* or *ear of corn*, the *galley* or *ship*, and the *lunette*, which represented both the new *moon* and a small boat.

of a boat or ship, as any other than a symbol of *Kêd* or *Ceridwen,* the Arkite goddess, or *Ceres* of the Britons.

This is precisely the image which Taliesin gives us of that mystical personage. We have repeatedly heard him describing her as a *hen:* and in giving an account of his initiation into her mysteries, he says of this portentous hen "On the edge of a covering cloth (the mystic veil) she "caught me in her fangs—In appearance she was as large "as a *proud mare,* which she also resembled—then she was "swelling out, like a *ship upon the waters*—into a dark re-"ceptacle she cast me: *she carried me back into the sea of "Dylan.*" (W. Archaiol. p. 19. See also the preceding Essay, Sect. III.)

Here the astonished aspirant beholds the goddess Ceridwen in the complex form of a *bird,* a *mare,* and a *ship.* Such was her image in the sacred circle, or her portraiture upon the veil of the sanctuary. How could such a representation have been made in painting or sculpture, but by sketching a figure with the *head,* and perhaps the *wings* of a *bird;* by giving the body a certain bend, so as to resemble a *boat,* or the *hulk of a ship;* by adding the *tail* of a *horse,* and some substitutes for four legs; and by adjusting the parts, so as rudely to *imitate the figure of a horse?*

But by this contrivance, the identical figure on the British coins is produced. This figure, therefore, is no other than *Ceridwen,* the Ceres of our ancestors. The Bard and the engraver could never have coincided in this monstrous departure from the course of nature, without having the same imaginary being in view.

But that the ideas, darkly conveyed by the mystical horse, were perfectly familiar to the persons for whose use the Karn-brê coins were designed, is evident, from the abridgements which were allowed, and the simple touches which often served to intimate the presence of the complicated figure. Upon this subject, I shall adduce the words of Dr. Borlase.

"There is one thing more necessary to be observed, in "order to place these coins with propriety, which is, that "several of the Karn-brê coins have not the horse on the "reverse, (as No. VIII. IX. X. XI.) (*Vide* No. XI.

“ *plate annexed),* but instead thereof, have several members “ and symbols adjusted together, in such a manner as to “ imitate the shape of a horse, and become, when joined “ together, the *emblem,* rather than the figure of that “ creature, which the first engraver *knew no better how to* “ *design.* These several symbols are not to be explained, “ but by comparing the coins in which we find the same “ parts inserted in the composition of an entire figure, and “ others, in which the same parts are detached and unconnected.

“ The latter must derive their light from the former. “ For example: in No. VIII. you find three of the figures “ marked in the table of symbols *(Borlase's Antiq.* No. I.) “ In No. IX. there are four of the same symbols.—What “ should be the intent of placing such figures, in such “ numbers, on these reverses? Why, in No. XVIII. *(see* “ *the plate annexed)* and XIX. we find the legs of the horse “ made in this unnatural fashion; and it is observable, that “ where the horse is not, there these legs, the most useful “ parts of this creature, are placed. - - - - They are “ placed two and two, with a *ball* or wheel between them, “ as in the coins which have the horse entire. Between “ them, the *half moon* (of which by and by) *dips his convex* “ *part* somewhat in the manner of the horse's barrel, above “ which, *another crescent-like bunch forms the back;* a *round* “ *ball* turns to shape the buttock, and on the fore part a “ *thick handle of a javelin slopes upwards from the breast, to* “ *form the neck and crest of the horse.*” *(Borlase's Antiq. of Cornwall,* p. 276.)

Thus far Dr. Borlase, who only contemplates the civil and military affairs of the Britons, and imputes every deviation from nature to the rudeness of the engraver's art. But as I have shewn, that the entire figure, called the *horse,* was a symbol of the British Ceres, so it appears that each of the heterogeneous parts which enter into the composition of that figure, was symbolical of something in the mystical establishment of that goddess.

Kêd, or Ceridwen, was an imaginary genius, supposed to preside over the sacred ship; and in these coins a detached *lunette,* or *boat,* is actually substituted for the body of the horse; and in one specimen, that part presents the elevation of the *Cromlech, Maenarch,* or *Maen Ketti,* which covered the cell of that divinity; whilst the back of the figure is composed of a crescent, the celestial symbol of the same mystical personage.

Instead of the hinder parts of the horse, we remark certain hollow *circles*,* or *ovals*, exactly resembling those circular and oval temples which embellish the *Antiquities of Cornwall*, and to which the Bards so frequently allude.

As a substitute for the neck and crest, either a *staff*, or the *branch of some evergreen*, slopes upwards, from the direction of the boat, which constitutes the centre of the figure. This staff or branch I regard as the *gestamen* of the priests—the *Hudlath* and *Hudwydd*, or *magical wand*, mentioned by Taliesin; and the *branch* which was carried by the Bard, as the badge of his sacred character, and of which Aneurin says—" That *branch* might whisper, before " the fierce onset, the effectual songs which claimed obe- " dient attention—the songs of Llywy, the assuager of " tumult and battle. Then would the sword retire to the " left side, the warrior, with his hand, would support the " empty corslet, and the sovereign, from his treasure chest, " would search out the precious reward." *(Gododin*, Song 25.)

The *head* and *beak* are those of a *bird*, that is, of *Ceridwen*, the *hen;* and the legs are composed of little strait bars, of equal length and size, which may be referred to those *lots* or *tallies*, so often mentioned by Taliesin and Merddin. These tallies are generally mounted at both ends by thick *rings*, or perforated *globules*, which I can compare to nothing but the sacred *glains* described in Camden's *Denbighshire*.

This complete figure of a *horse*, therefore, as here depicted, seems to have represented, not only the *person* of the British Ceres, but also the whole of her mystical establishment. The belly was the sacred *ship*, of which that goddess was the representative genius. The back was the *moon*, her celestial emblem. The hinder part of the body constituted the *sacred circle*, which inclosed the *Maenarch*, *stone ark*, or womb of the goddess, in which her aspirants were regenerated. The neck was the mystical *staff*, or *branch*, carried by her priests, as the badge of their office and authority. The legs were the *lots* or *tallies*, by which her will was interpreted, and these were guarded by the mystical *glains*, the appropriate insignia of her votaries; whilst the head and beak represented that *bird*, whose form she had assumed, with some allusion, perhaps, to the birds of *augury*, mentioned by Taliesin and Merddin.

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* In Camden's coins, which seem to have been struck in ages when our mythologists paid more regard to the simplicity of nature, we generally find these circles distinct from the figure of the horse.

Such is the whimsical fancy of heathenism. It is not my business to defend its various conceits, but only to point them out, and explain their meaning, as well as I can. I may, however, vindicate the cause of my countrymen so far, as to remind the reader, that the unnatural combination of parts, in the forming of sacred symbols, was not peculiar to them. The pagans of most barbarous nations had gods equally monstrous, and perhaps more inexplicable. The various symbols which make up the image of the British Ceres, are agreeable to general mythology. Mr. Bryant has shewn, that Ceres was the genius of the ark; that a *boat*, or a crescent, was her symbol; that she was the same character as *Hippa*, the *mare;* and that she was generally attended by her favourite *bird*.

Were the image of this goddess, with her British emblems, to be designed by a Greek or Roman, in the meridian age of their refinement, he might represent her as a venerable matron, seated in a boat, with her various attributes disposed about her in decent order. But the unrefined Britons were satisfied with a grotesque figure, which comprehended the various emblems of their goddess, and, as we learn from Taliesin, such figures were introduced into their sanctuaries.

In the light with which I view the British coins, I cannot help admiring the precision with which they display the very same mass of superstition, which I had already contemplated in the Bards and the Triads. There I had traced the lore of Druidism in written language, which, though mystical, was seldom impenetrably obscure: here I read the same legend, impressed upon tablets of *gold*, and *silver*, and *brass*.

The reader will have gathered from the preceding Essay, that though the mythological horses of the Britons are not invariably to be regarded as symbols of Ceres, yet they had always some reference to a sacred *ship*. Thus the *black horse of the seas,* which carried the eight mystical personages out of Caledonia into Mona, and the two others which are classed with him, have evidently this allusion.

The steed of the *sun* is repeatedly mentioned by Taliesin: but it must be recollected, that the solar divinity was honoured in conjunction with the Diluvian patriarch; that he presided in the same *Caer Sidi,* which was sacred to *Ceridwen;* and that the great feat of his horse was to carry his master from the *marriage feast of the ocean,* and to make his path be perceived in the sea, and in the mouths of rivers; so that the whole tradition respecting mythological horses, refers to the history and connexions of that mystical character, who appeared to every astonished and dismayed aspirant in the shape and size of a *proud mare,* yet swelled out like *a ship on the waters,* and actually set sail.

Instead of a horse, we are, then, for the most part, to contemplate a *mare,* the symbol or personification of the British Ceres, and the same as the mythological Hippa of the ancients.

It is not my intention to enlarge upon the subject of these coins; but merely to point out the use of Bardic imagery in their explanation: I shall, therefore, only consider the figure of the horse and his accompaniments, upon some specimens of Camden's collection.

In No. 6, Tab. 1. *(see the plate annexed),* the drawing appears to be purely British. The obverse presents the rude figure of a horse, stooping under an enormous *vase,* which, instead of being laid upon his back, seems to rise immediately out of his body, which it completely covers. This vase, having a ridge of pearls round its border, corresponds with Taliesin's description of that famous emblem of Druidism, the sacred *pair,* or cauldron of *Ceridwen,* and the *ruler of the deep.*

Neud pair pen Annwfn! Pwy y vynud?
Gwrym am ei oror a mererid - - -

" Is not this the cauldron of the ruler of the deep! What " is its quality? With the ridge of pearls round its border?" *(See Appendix,* No. III.)

As in the Karn-brê coins, the *boat,* the *circular temple,* the magic branch, &c. constitute the several parts of the mystical horse, so, in the present instance, we find that important vase, which was of indispensible use in the sacred mysteries, intimately connected with the *person* of the Arkite goddess.

The symbolical animal supports upon its head a *circle,* or *disk,* containing three small *rings,* or *balls.* These diminutive figures, which embellish most of the British coins, must have had some definite import. The *Ovum Anguinum,* described by Pliny, was esteemed in Gaul, *Insigne Druidis,* the *peculiar badge of a Druid.* The same was known in Britain, where it was equally respected: hence the Bard says—" Lively was the aspect of him who, in his prowess, " had snatched over the ford, that *involved ball,* which " casts its rays to a distance, the splendid product of the " adder, shot forth by serpents." *(See Append.* No. XIV.) I have shewn, that the *glain,* or *glass ring,* was a similar mark of distinction amongst our heathen ancestors: and I presume that the *balls* and *small rings* upon the British coins, are intended for some of those sacred trinkets; and that they are introduced as *emblems of those characters* who had a right to carry them. Hence the presence of the *ovum,* or *glain,* implies the presence of a *Druid,* or *priest.* And the three balls, inclosed within one circle, and supported by the mystical goddess, may be viewed as symbols of the three orders of the priesthood—the *Druids,* properly so called, the *Bards,* and the *Ovates,*

Over the sacred vase is a large *studded circle,* raised upon the ground of the coin, and inclosing another circle, with four raised studs in the centre. As in these coins we often find similar circles, encompassing an appropriate part of the field, and ambitiously exhibited, I conclude they also must have had some determinate meaning. Medallists have sometimes called them *strings of pearl:* but here is no appearance of *strings,* and the studs are, beyond all proportion, too large for pearls. It may also be remarked, that the studs are not adjusted as ornaments of the principal figures, nor thrown carelessly down, as if they were intended for the display of riches; but, on the contrary, they are disposed *on the field* in regular order, as the outlines of *permanent demarkation.* I therefore regard them as figures of those circular temples, which are so frequent in several districts of Britain, and some of which are ascertained to have been sacred to Ceres, and those characters which were honoured in society with that goddess.

On the coin before us we have, then, the circular temple, with its central *Adytum*, or sacred cell, inclosed within a raised mound, as we often find it in British monuments.

On one side of this temple, and over the vase, is a figure resembling a *rose*, which probably alludes to the select plants and flowers employed in the preparation of the cauldron; or to the flowers which the Bards and Druids wore at the solemn festivals.

The reverse of this coin gives a duplicate of the mystical animal, as well as of the temple, and the disk with the three connected balls. But the horse is now delivered of his load, the season of the great solemnity, when the cauldron was produced, is now past. Two of the horse's feet rest upon a small chest, or some such thing; the disk is taken down from his head, and he is in the act of depositing a figure like the leaf of a *trefoil*, which was the symbol of union in the three orders. This coin is wholly occupied by memorials of the worship of Ceres.

No. 8 *(see the plate annexed)* is a gold coin which, in the figure of the horse, displays the free hand of the British mythologist, contemning alike the simplicity of nature, and the elegance of art. Though the group of heterogeneous members produce something like the rude outlines of a horse, just enough to procure it that name amongst antiquaries, nothing can be more dissimilar to that animal in all his parts.

This *horse*, like those on the Karn-brê coins, has the sharp beak of a bird—so Ceridwen assumed the shape of a bird, and was emphatically styled the *hen*. This horse, upon his bird's head, has a *high crest*—so Ceridwen was described as *Iâr ddu gopawg, a black, high-crested hen*. This crest is *divided*—so Ceridwen was *Iâr grafrudd, gribesgar*—a hen with red fangs, and *a divided crest*. And the divided crest is curved into the *horns* of a *cow*, or the shape of a *crescent;* but the *cow* and the *crescent* were symbols of Ceridwen.

The body of the horse is bent downwards, so as to resemble a *boat*, or the hulk of a *ship*. Thus Ceridwen presented herself to the eyes of the noviciate, in the combined form of a *bird*, and a proud *mare;* and, at the same time, began to swell out *like a ship on the waters*. That the curvature of the body is actually intended to imitate a *ship*, or *boat*, is evident from the Karn-brê coins, and several others, in which the simple and *detached* figure of a boat is substituted for the body of the horse. This is therefore the image which Taliesin contemplated with dread and astonishment, upon his entrance into the mystic hall of Ceridwen.

Instead of feet, this horse, like those of the Karn-brê coins, has short, detached figures, resembling billets, or tallies of wood, and these are headed with the sacred glains. Such feet, as I have already hinted, seem to represent those tallies or lots, so often mentioned by the Bards as means of divination, or of discovering the will of the gods; and the priests, symbolized by the glains, were the interpreters.

This grotesque horse holds in his mouth a luniform figure, resembling a covered coracle, or British boat. It may be recollected that Ceridwen, the *mare-bird*, covered her aspirant in a small coracle, and carried him into the sea.

Three *Ova* are suspended from the tail of the horse, and appear as if they were dropping to the ground. These are, probably, the three orders, symbolized by the Ova proceeding from the mystical sanctuary, which is described as the womb of the goddess.

On each side of the neck is the *trefoil*, or emblem of union amongst the three orders. These seem to have fallen from a coracle, which is reversed or emptied under two circular temples.

Under the belly of the horse, we remark a plain circle, inclosing a wheel. In the same situation, we sometimes find a studded circle, or concentric circles, and sometimes a female figure rising to view.

Mr. Walker, in his notes upon Camden's coins, says, that "The wheel under the horse, amongst the Romans, "intimated the making of an highway for carts, so many "of which being, in the Roman times, made in this "country, well deserved such a memorial." Upon which passage Dr. Borlase remarks—"What the wheel signified "among the Romans, I shall not dispute; but it could not "be inserted in the British coins (as he seems to imply) for "that purpose; for there were no Roman ways made in "Britain till after Claudius's conquest, and we find the "wheel common in Cunobelin's coins, and in Cassibelan's " - - - - and also in the Cornish coins, which, from "all their characters, appear to be older than the rest." (*Antiq. of Cornwall*, p. 277.)

These circles, wheels, and female figures, are, probably, various representations of *Arianrod*, the *goddess of the silver wheel*, the Iris of antiquity, of whom we have had some account in the poem called the *chair of Ceridwen*. We are there told, that when Avagddu, the son of Ceridwen, wanted a rampart to protect him from the *repetition* of the *deluge*, Gwydion (Hermes) composed this sacred character of certain flowers, and adorned her with the bold curves, and the virtue of various folds.—"Then the goddess of the *silver* "*wheel*, of *auspicious mien*, *the dawn of serenity*, the greatest *restrainer of sadness*, in behalf of the Britons, speedily "throws *round his hall the stream of the* IRIS; a stream "which *scares away violence from the earth*, and causes the "bane of its former state, *round the circle of the world*, *to* "*subside*."

As this character obtained her name from a *wheel*, that implement may be regarded as her proper emblem. But instead of a wheel, we often find two concentric circles, one studded, and the other plain, or an image of those temples which consist of a *circle of massy stones*, and an *orbicular bank of earth*.

The reason of this may be collected from the passage I have just quoted. This auspicious goddess was protectress of the *circle of the world*, or *mundane circle*, which is a well-known name of the Druidical sanctuary. In this situation, therefore, she still *poured* the mystic stream round her Arkite votaries, and thus kept aloof the demons of mischief from the hallowed precinct. She is stationed beneath the mystic horse, because she is connected with and subservient to the genius of the ark.

The reverse of this coin exhibits nothing remarkable but the word BODUO, probably of the same import as *Budd*, one of the names of the British Ceres; whence *Buddug*, the *goddess of victory*, a title assumed by the famous Queen of the Iceni.

For my own satisfaction, I have examined most of the symbols on the ruder and uninscribed coins, and found them, in general, consistent with Bardic imagery; but for the present, I shall only request the attention of the reader to a few specimens which present inscriptions in Roman characters, and which appear to have been struck between tha æra of Cæsar's invasion, and the full establishment of the Roman government in this country.

In this series, the designs are more elegant and simple. We may suppose that they were executed by Roman artists, or else that the British engravers had improved by their intercourse with the Romans. It may be curious to ascertain, whether these carry any marks of the national superstition, which appears in the older specimens.

The first of this description in Camden's collection, which carries the figure of the horse, is No. 3, Tab. 1. *(see the plate annexed.)*

This is a gold coin, attributed to *Cunobeline*, a British king, who lived in the reigns of Augustus and Tiberius. On the one side, we read the word CUNO, which has been considered as an abbreviation of this prince's name; and on the other, CAMU, implying Camulodunum, his principal city.

But here it must be remarked, that CUNO is found upon coins that bear a great variety of heads, sometimes *female* heads; and upon others which have no head at all. Hence it may be presumed, that this inscription has a close affinity with the British word *Cûn.* a *chief*, or *sovereign personage*, which may be translated *Dominus*, or *Domina*, as the case shall require.

Instead of the head of Cunobeline, the coin before us displays an *ear of corn*, which was an attribute of Ceres, even amongst the Britons: for she is styled by the Bards, *Ogyrven Amhad*, the *goddess of various seeds:* and we are told—" The dragon chief of the world (the Diluvian pa-" triarch) formed the curvatures of *Kŷd* (her sacred boat), " which passed the dales of grievous waters (the deluge), " having the fore part stored with *corn*, and mounted aloft, "with the connected serpents." In the mystical process, the Arkite goddess devours the aspirant, when he has assumed the form of a *grain* of *wheat:* and that aspirant says of himself, that he had been a *grain of the Arkites,* which had *grown upon a hill.* Hence the priests of this goddess are styled *Hodigion, bearers of ears of corn;* and it was the office of Aneurin, her distinguished votary, *Amwyn tywysen* gortirot—to protect the ear of corn on the height.*

Thus it appears, that this symbol was sacred to the Arkite goddess: it cannot, therefore, have represented Cunobeline as a British king, or have appertained to him, unless he was one of her priests, or, at least, an adept in her mysteries.

On the reverse of this coin is the *horse,* or rather the *Hippa,* or *mare,* whose form this divinity had assumed. The animal does not here exhibit the wild extravagance of a British mythologist; yet it carries certain emblems to mark its mystical character.

Over the back is a small *ring* or *ball,* from which a *flame* appears to ascend. Close to the mouth is a second ball, and at the other extremity a third.

The *Ovum* or *Glain* being the symbol of a priest, we may infer that the Ovum over the back of the horse, with its *ascending flame,* represents the presiding priest, who kept up the perpetual fire of Ceres. To this fire we have frequent allusions in the Bards, particularly in the songs of the Gododin.

As for the other two *balls,* or *Glains,* their peculiar situation seems, especially when compared with the ruder specimens, to allude to a *certain process* in the British mysteries. These figures being regarded as emblems of devotees, we may recollect, that both Taliesin, and the tale which describes his initiation, represent the mystical *mare* as devouring her noviciate, and afterwards reproducing him as her own offspring.

Under the belly of the horse we remark a studded circle, inclosing a protuberant mass, or else a concentric circle. This I have already remarked, as a symbol of the *goddess of the silver wheel,* who guarded the limits of the British temple.

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* It may be proper to apprise the mythologist, that *Tywysen,* the Spica, also implies a general, but obscene symbol of heathenism. The curious may see an example, *Camb. Reg.* V. II. p. 307.

This coin, therefore, relates solely to the honours of the British Ceres, and to those characters which superstition had placed in her retinue.

No. 5, Tab. 1. *(see the plate annexed),* is a silver coin, which has the name CUNOBELINE at full length: but whether the head is that of the prince who bore this title, or that of the British *Apollo,* must remain a question, as it has no peculiar attribute. It must be understood, that *Cûn* implies a *lord* or *lady;* and *Belin* is the name of the British Apollo, or of the Helio-arkite god, the same as *Hu: (see Append.* No. XI.) so that *Cunobelinus* is nothing more than *Dominus Belinus,* or *Dominus Sol.**

I have had occasion to observe in the preceding Essay, that it was a general practice amongst the old British princes, to assume some title of the god to whom they were devoted: and it must have been in consequence of this custom, that we had a celebrated prince, in the reigns of Augustus and Tiberius, styled *Cunobelinus.* This does not seem to have been his real name, but merely an assumed title; for we are told he was the father of the renowned Caractacus. (See Baxter's Glossary. V. *Caractacus.*) Yet the Bards and Triads always mention the father of that prince by the name of *Brân, Brennus,* or the *raven.*

On the reverse of this coin, the horse is accompanied by a crescent; whence it may be inferred, that he is merely the representative of a character, of which the moon, or a boat, in the form of a crescent, was also an emblem. But Mr. Bryant has shewn, that the crescent, whether referred to the moon or the boat, was an emblem of the Arkite goddess. The same thing appears in our national mythology.

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* That the Britons understood this as a title of their Apollo, is evident, from No. 7 of this table, where Apollo appears playing upon his harp, with the inscription *Cunobe;* and from No. 23, which presents the same figure of Apollo, with the name CUNOBELI, *Dominus Beli.* So Merddin mentions the seven sacred fires (q. planets?) of which Cunobeline was the first. (Append. No. IX.) And in the poem called the *Talisman of Cunobeline,* he is represented as a demon-god.

Both *Lloer*, the *moon*, and *Cwrwg*, the *boat*, were symbols which pertained to the British Ceres. (See the poem called the *Chair of Taliesin.)* The horse upon this coin is, therefore, the mystical *Rewys*, or *Ceridwen*.

And it has occurred to me as a general remark, that those coins which have either the name or symbols of *Belin*, the Helio-arkite god, on one side, constantly discover some emblem of the Arkite goddess upon the other side; and thus connect the two great objects of superstition, which were worshipped in conjunction with the sun and moon.

Thus we find that the devices upon those specimens, which combine the native thoughts of the Britons with the simple elegance of Roman art, have a marked allusion to the worship of Ceres, and to that peculiar kind of superstition, which runs through the works of the Bards and the British Triads.

I may also add, that the legends* appear strictly appropriate to the mythology of the engraver, and confirm the idea I have suggested, as to the mystical nature of his design.

To give a few examples.—Whoever will look over Camden's tables, will perceive that the ear of corn, that favourite attribute of Ceres, is frequently depicted upon the coins which have the image of the *horse*. But on No. 13, the mystic animal appears without his discriminative symbols; on the reverse, however, we find the word DIAS inclosed within a curious frame. This word, in the Irish language, implies an *ear of corn:* it is therefore introduced instead of that sacred symbol.

It is remarkable, that the word *Tasc* occurs more frequently than any other upon the British coins. *Tasc*, in the language and orthography of the ancient Bards, signifies *a pledge*, or *bond of confirmation*. In the present Welsh it is spelt *Tasg*, and in Irish *Taisg;* and both dialects have preserved its meaning.

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* The legends or inscriptions are, undoubtedly, in the dialects of the several tribes by whom the coins were struck. These dialects may have varied in their orthography and inflexion in the course of eighteen centuries: yet it may be presumed, their radical words are to be found in the two principal branches of the ancient Celtic, namely, the language of the ancient Bards, and that of Irish MSS.

To *Tasc,* the letters *ia, ie,* or *io,* are often added. In order to account for them, I must observe, that *De, Dia,* and *Dio,* in several Celtic dialects, implied, *God, of God, sacred,* or *divine.* The Irish language supplies them all, either as distinct words, or in composition: and in this language the *d* is silenced by a point, or an *h;* so that *Tasc-dhe, Tasc-dhia, Tasc-dhio,* would be pronounced *Tascie, Tascia, Tascio,* the *divine* or *sacred pledge.* It may fairly be presumed, that our engravers spelt their legends as they were pronounced.

The reader will recollect that the Arkite goddess presided over *corn;* that she was represented as a gigantic *woman,* and that her favourite symbols were a *mare,* a *bitch,* and a *sow.* We shall find the word *Tasc* enter into the composition of legends which allude to her worship, under each of these symbols. Thus in Camden's first table, No. 23, we have the human head of this goddess, with the legend *Tasc van it.*

In the composition of Irish words, *Bhan,* pronounced *Van,* implies a *woman* or *lady;* and *Ith,* anciently *It,* is *corn.* In Welsh composition, *Wen* implies a lady, as in the sacred titles, Cerid-*wen,* Ol-*wen,* &c. and *Yd,* anciently *It,* is *corn:* so that *Tasc Van It* imports, *pledge—of the lady—of corn.*

Mr. Whitaker has published a coin *(see the plate annexed),* in which this goddess appears under the combined image of a *woman* and a *mare,* with the legend *Tasc 'Ia No Van It.*

Naoi, in Irish, implies a *ship;* and I have shewn that the Bards use *Naw* in the same sense, and that *Aw,* in a hundred instances, are contracted into *o. Tasc ia no van it,* implies, therefore, *the sacred pledge of the* SHIP *of the lady of corn.*

The same author has published a coin,* on which a child appears mounted upon a *dog,* with the abbreviated legend, *Tasc No Va—pledge of the ship of the lady.*

This must appear obscure, till we recollect that Ceridwen assumed the form of a *bitch,* chaced the aspirant, represented as an *infant,* and in the mystical process caught him, and inclosed him in the sacred *boat.*

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* See Hist. of Manchester, V. I. p. 342, and V. II. p. 67. 2d *Edit.*

The reader has seen a curious mythological tale, in which this *lady*, or her *ship*, is represented under the name and figure of a sow. And in Camden's table, No. 22, we see the image of the mystical *sow*, with the legend TASC NO VAN IT, *pledge of the ship of the lady of corn.*

How shall we account for these similar inscriptions upon such a variety of devices, without referring to the national mythology, which ascribed these several symbols to one and the same mystical character? On Camden's coin, No. 16, we have the horse in his natural shape, and in good proportion, but without any peculiar attribute, excepting the inscription ORCETI. This evidently consists of two British words: OR is a *limit, circle,* or *sanctuary;* and *Céd,* anciently written *Cet,* is one of the most familiar names of the British Ceres. It often occurs in the passages which I have quoted, and in the Appendix. This goddess was also called CETI, or *Cetti:* thus I have shewn that the Cromlech, which covered her sacred cell, was called *Maen Cetti,* the stone of *Cetti.* The Roman engraver having, for the sake of neatness, omitted the *studded circle,* or *temple of Ceres,* which generally accompanies the mystical horse, thought proper to identify his subject by adding the legend, *Or Ceti, the sanctuary of Ceti.*

On another of Camden's coins, No. 32, we perceive a female head, with the legend DIRETE. History mentions no *queen* or *city* of this name; but in our old orthography, *Direit,* and in the modern, *Dyrreith,* is a title of the mystical goddess, who is introduced by that name in the *talisman of Cunobeline,* where she assumes the form of a *horse,* and carries the generous hero to battle and victory.

These inscriptions, combined with the various symbols which have been remarked, are to me demonstration sufficient, that these coins are to be explained only by the mythological imagery of the Bards.

But almost every medallist who has taken them up, perceives, exclusive of the symbols I have mentioned, the figures of *warriors, pieces of armour,* and other *military implements.*

All this seems perfectly to accord with one of the uses to which they were applied.

I have promised to produce some evidence, that certain pieces of gold and silver, which answer the description of several of these coins, were regarded by the old Britons as *charms* or *talismans*, and as such delivered to those votaries of Bardism, who took up *arms*, when the Druids sanctioned *war*, for the defence of the country. What I have now to add, will shew the high probability of this curious fact, if it will not ascertain its absolute certainty.

Part of Taliesin's poem, in which he commemorates the mythological horses, has been presented to the reader. *(See Append.* No. V.) The Bard introduces the subject with a hymn to the sun, in which he mentions the steed of that luminary, and concludes the poem with a recital of certain symbols of Diluvian lore: whence it may be inferred, that the matter which occupies the intermediate space, pertains to the same Helio-arkite superstition.

This part of the poem is filled with an account of certain celebrated horses; and the Bard does not mean the *living animals*, but mere figures, which were the subject of *magical* preparation; for thus he brings forward his catalogue.

Nid mi gwr llwfr llwyd,
Crwybr, wrth clwyd,
Hud fy nau garant.

" I, the grey-headed man, am no remiss character, con-
" cealing under a hurdle the *magic* of my two friends."

And as it may be presumed, that these magical figures are the same to which the Bard alludes in other passages, it is evident that they were impressed upon pieces of gold and silver; for Taliesin tells us *(W. Archaiol.* p. 28)—

Atuyn cant ag ariant amaerwy—
Atuyn march ar eurgalch gylchwy.

" Beautiful is the *circle* with its *silver border*—Beautiful
" is the *horse* on the *gold-covered circle*."

As certain Druids, under the name of *Pheryllt*, were famous for some magical preparations in metal, so their art comprised the formation of these talismans, whatever they were: and to this the same Bard evidently alludes, when he says—*(W. Archaiol.* p. 34.)

Gwneynt eu perion
A ferwynt heb don;
Gwneynt eu delidau
Yn oes oeseu:
Dyduth dyddyccawd
Oddyfnwedydd gwawd.

"Then they caused their furnaces to boil, *without water,* "and prepared their *solid metals,* to endure for the age of "ages: the *trotter* (horse) was brought forth, from the "deep promulgator of song." And the Bard immediately proceeds to recite the mythology of the Helio-arkite god and the Arkite goddess, to whom these horses pertained.

But to go on with the *song of the horses.* The talismans which presented these magical figures, were of small compass. They could be conveyed, as private tokens, out of one person's hand into that of another—*O'm llaw i'th law—dyt dwp dim*—"Out of my hand into thy hand—put on the "covering, whatever it be."

Hence it may be assumed, that these were the *Arwyddon,* or *tokens,* which the Helio-arkite god, or his priest, delivered to his votaries, and of which he demanded the exhibition, at the solemnities of his great festival—

"Who are the three chief ministers, who have defended "the country? Who are the three experienced men, who, "having preserved the *token,* are coming with alacrity to "meet their lord?" *(See Append.* No. IV.)

And not only so, but that they were the same as the *Eurem* and *Eurell,* or small pieces of gold, which the Cabiric priests displayed, as credentials of their office and authority. *(See Append.* No. VII.)

The proprietors of these magical horses are the gods, or distinguished votaries of the old superstition. We have here *March Mayawg,* the *horse of Maia,* the *great mother, A March Genethawg,* and the *horse of the damsel* Κορη, or Proserpine—*A March Caradawg, Cymrhwy teithiawg,* and *the horse of Caractacus, characterised by his ring.* After these, come the horse of *Arthur,* of *Taliesin,* and of *Ceidiaw,* the mystical father of Gwenddoleu;

Ac eraill, yn rîn,
Rac tîr allwyn.

" And others of mysterious power, against the affliction
" of the land."

Let us now consider the shape of these talismanic horses, and we shall be convinced, that they are precisely the same monsters which are exhibited in the tables of Camden and Borlase.

The first pair are described as *Deu dich far dichwant*, " *the two hen-headed, unbiassed steeds*." These are the *horses of the old coins*. Then comes *Pybyr llai llwynin*, " the " strenuous horse of the *gloom of the grove*," a name which marks his connection with the prevailing superstition. To him is subjoined, *Cornan cynneifawg*, " the accomplished " horse of the *crescent*." This is the same which carried *Cynvelyn* and his companions to see the sacred fires of the Druids. *(W. Archaiol.* V. II. p. 20.)

To this succeed *Tri charn aflawg*, " three horses, having " *the hoof, or foot, secured with a band*." They seem to be of the same kind as *Carngraff*, the horse of *Brân*, or *Cunobeline*, which had the *ring, or band, round his foot*. (W. Archaiol. p. 167.) And the same as *Carn Gaffon*, " the " horse which was hoofed with a *circled staff*, mentioned in the *talisman* of *Cunobeline*. And thus *Carn Aflawg* describes those horses, whose feet consisted of little staves, capped with thick rings, such as I have remarked in the Karn-brê coins, and in some of Camden's collection. Another of these horses was—

Cethin, March Ceidiaw,
Corn avarn arnaw.

" *Hideous*; the horse of *Ceidio*, which has the horn of " *Avarn*." Whatever the word *Avarn* may imply, I have remarked in Camden (Tab. I. No. 8. *see annexed plate)*, a horse which truly answers the name of *Ceithin, hideous*, or *monstrous*, with a pair of *large horns*. This is a gold coin; and the Bards speak of the gold of *Avarn (see Owen's Dict. in voce)*, as having a power to arrest or pervert judgment—these tokens may have had the same influence, *ad victorias litium*, as the Ovum Anguinum, described by Pliny.

These remarks upon Taliesin's *Canu y Meirch*, may serve to prepare the reader for an attentive perusal of the curious poem, called *Gwarchan Cynvelyn*. " THE TALISMAN OF

"CUNOBELINE." In the introductory section of the preceding Essay, I inserted some passages of this poem in Mr. Owen's translation; but not to dwell on the freedom of his version, which is not sufficiently close for a disquisition of this kind, I observe, that the text of the original, as given by Mr. Owen (*Gent. Mag.* Nov. 1790), is essentially different from the old copies, cited in the Welsh *Archaiogia,* as well as from the still older MS. of Mr. Jones. I shall therefore give the text from the latter, with scrupulous accuracy, and add as literal a translation as the idioms of the two languages will admit: the singularity of the subject demands a few pages of introduction.

This poem has been generally ascribed to *Taliesin;* but it appears from internal evidence, that it is the production of *Aneurin.* The author speaks of himself as having been present at the fatal banquet of Catraeth, where he was wounded and made prisoner, and from whence he narrowly escaped with his life. This was the peculiar fate of Aneurin, as we learn by his Gododin.

The date of the composition must be, somewhere in the interval, between the massacre of the British nobles, and the death of Hengist; for the Bard deplores the fall of the former, and denounces vengeance against the Saxon king.

The design of the poem is to excite the spirit of the Britons, to retaliate upon their enemies, and to assert their own independence. With this view the Bard, whether in compliance with his own fanatical delusion, or as an artful manager of the prevailing superstition, enlarges upon the awful consequences that would ensue, were he to practise certain magical rites in the exhibition of a charm or talisman. Whilst he is descanting upon this subject, his indignation bursts forth, he has recourse to his mystic art, and the talisman is produced. The power of this spell is declared to be such, that it would safely guard the patriotic warrior through every hazardous enterprise, and ensure the destruction of the treacherous foe. With this solemn mummery, our magician mixes some elogia upon certain distinguished characters, who had bravely defended their country, or gloriously fallen in the assertion of its cause. These parts I shall pass over at present, and offer some remarks upon the connection of the Bardic talisman, with those uncouth figures which appear upon the ancient British coins.

In the opening of the poem, the Bard announces his charm, as comprising, 1. *Gorchegin, the high shoots,* such as were used in the formation of *lots,* or *omen-sticks;* 2. *Gweilging,* the *wand* or *gestamen* of the divining Bard; and 3. *Torch,* the *wreath* or *coil.*

This word generally implies the wreath or torques of gold which the noble Briton wore about his neck; but Aneurin uses the term, to describe the diadem or wreath that surrounded the temples of a prince—*Torchawr am rân:* and it is here called the wreath of the *unobstructed pervader;* that is, of the *solar divinity,* whose laurel wreath so frequently occurs upon the old coins, together with the *lots,* and the *sacred wand* or *branch.*

Mr. Owen's copy, instead of *Trychdrwydd,* the title of the Helio-arkite god, reads *Twrch Trwyth,* the *boar of the spray,* a personage often introduced in the ancient tales. But whether this variation is from authority, or conjectural amendment, it comes nearly to the same point. The mythological *boar* and *sow* were the *Arkite god* and *goddess.* The *boar of the spray* was the son of *Taredd,* the *pervasion;* and *An Taredd* is a name of the deluge. *(See Appendix,* No. XII.) Edward Llwyd quotes the following passage relative to this character, out of an old mythological narrative,

> Ny ladavd namyn un parchell, o voch y
> Tvrch Trvyth. Gouynnvys y gvyr y
> Arthur, beth oed ystyr yr hvch hunnv:
> Y dyvavt ynte, *Brenhin uu.**

"Of the swine of Twrch Trwyth, only one little pig was "slain. The men inquired of Arthur, the import of that "hog; and he replied, *He was a king.*"

But what figure were the *shoots,* the *wand,* and the *wreath* or *circle,* when duly adjusted, to produce upon the face of the Bardic talisman? We find it was the *figure of a horse.* This horse, however, was of the same monstrous shape as those which we often contemplate upon the ancient coins.

In the first place, he is named *Try-Chethin, thoroughly monstrous* or *hideous,* which is the same as the *Cethin* of

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* Yst. K. ab Kilydh. Archaiol. Brit. p. 236.

Taliesin and the Triads. He is described as *cut off at the haunches*—these are distinguishing features of the figure upon the Karn-brê and some other British coins. He is called *Carn Gaffon*—his *hoof or foot consisted of the Caffon, stick*, which was guarded at the end *with a band or ring*, or else *staff of fear:* this must imply, either the divining *lot*, or the *augural staff;* both of which appear in the *Nummi Britannici*.

The talismanic horse had *short, detached Esgyrn (bones)*, or, according to the copy in the Welsh Archaiology, *Esyrn, legs:* and this is also a mark of the figure upon the mysterious coins.

Again: it had short, diminutive *riders*. By this phrase, the magical Bard may have intended the *lunettes, glains*, and *trefoil leaves*, so often found upon the back of the horse in the British coins.

And to fix at once the character of the talismanic horse, he had the *beak* or *bill* of a *bird*. This is evidently the great enigma of the British coins, which I have already expounded.

The particulars hitherto related, are found in the Bard's introductory boast. When he comes in the next paragraph actually to produce his talisman, it appears that the first ceremony was the *due breaking of the rods*, or the formation of lots. He then exhibits the mystical horse, which was to be delivered to the patriotic warriors severally, together with the *nail* or *rivet*, the *border*, the *high-rimmed vessel*, and the *gem* or *glain*, figures which may easily be recognised in the old medals. And these symbols were to be conveyed to them, upon *the gold which was distributed*. Hence it is clear, that the characters of this talisman were impressed upon a piece of gold, or gilded metal, and that the device was not confined to a single copy; but that a sufficient number of duplicates were procured for those persons who had a claim to receive them. And we are told in the conclusion of the poem, that the sons of the *awful omen*, or those who had a right to approach the sacred fire, possessed them in common.

The charm thus conveyed to the votaries of Druidism, and their patriotic warriors, was emphatically styled *Gwar-*

chan Cynvelyn, the talisman of Cunobeline. It must then have consisted of certain pieces, ascribed to Cunobeline, which contained a magical device. It is known to every antiquary, that this is the name which most frequently occurs upon the British coins: and as it implies *Dominus Belinus,* sc. *Sol,* those specimens which exhibit the attributes of the solar divinity, though they want the title, may be deemed sacred to him.

This talisman was regarded as the highest acquisition of magical rites, and as the shield of the sacred festival, with which the man of fortitude repelled the affliction of his country.

To this reputation it must have had an undoubted claim, could the Bards have made good all their assertions in its favour. For it was announced as an infallible pledge, that Cynvelyn himself (here the magician must mean the *demon god),* and a *goddess,* named *Dyrraith,* would assume the forms of *horses,* and carry the patriotic heroes through the perils of battle; whilst the *Gwyllion,* or *Gallicenæ,* those mysterious priestesses, or island nymphs, who had the power, *se in qua velint animalia vertere* (Pomp. Mela, *L. III. c.* 8.) *to assume the form of whatever animals they pleased,* would attend the expedition, and pronounce their blessing upon the sanctified cause.

DYRRAITH, who is here associated with the Helio-arkite god, is described as of equal rank with *Mor-ion, Janus Nauta.* As her name implies she was the goddess of *fate,* or *necessity,* the same who conducted the Ogdoad through the deluge *(see Append.* No. III.), and therefore the *Arkite goddess,* who was venerated in the form of a *mare.*

Dyrraith is, undoubtedly, the same name which appears upon the old coins, under the softened orthography of DIRETE. Her head is that of an unadorned female, and the reverse has the horse, with some complex figure upon his back. *(See Gibson's Camden,* Tab. I. No. 32.)

When it was requisite for the defence of her votaries, the British Ceres assumed the character of a fury, and in that department she appropriates a variety of names.

Mr. Baxter *(Glossar. Antiq. Britan.),* under the article *Andrasta,* has remarked the following—*Etiam hodiè An-*

dras, &c.—" Amongst our Britons, even of the present
" day, *Andras* is a popular name of the goddess *Malen*, or
" *the lady*, whom the vulgar call *Y Vall*, that is, *Fauna*
" *Fatua*, and *Mam y Drwg*, the *Devil's dam*, or *Y Wrach*,
" the *old hag*. - - - - Some regarded her as a flying
" spectre. - - - - That name corresponded not only
" with *Hecate*, *Bellona*, and *Enyo*, but also with *Bona*
" *Dea*, the *great mother of the gods*, and the *terrestrial*
" *Venus*. - - - - In the fables of the populace, she is
" styled *Y Vad Ddu Hyll*, that is, *Bona Furva Effera;*
" and, on the other hand, *Y Vad Velen*, that is, *Helena*,
" or *Bona Flava*. - - - Agreeably to an ancient rite,
" the old Britons cruelly offered human sacrifices to this
" Andrasta; whence, as Dion relates, our amazon, Vondicca
" *(Boadicia)* invoked her with imprecations, previous
" to her engagement with the Romans. The memory of
" this goddess, or fury, remains to the present day; for
" men in a passion growl at each other, *Mae rhyw Andras,*
" *arnochwi, Some Andrasta possesses you*."

And again, under the article *Minervæ*.

" Malen is a popular name amongst the Britons, for the
" fury Andrasta, or, as the vulgar call her, the *Devil's*
" *dam*. Fable reports, that she had a *magical horse*, called
" *March Malen*, upon which sorcerers were wont to ride
" through the air. Whence the common proverb seems to
" have taken its rise—*A gasgler ar Varch Malen dan ei dor*
" *ydd â—What is gotten on the back of the horse of Malen,*
" *will go under his belly*."

This magical horse of tradition is, undoubtedly, the same which our tuneful wizard is conjuring up in the poem before us: and, from the description of his points, he may surely be recognized in the portentous monsters, which are found upon the old British coins. Here it may be remarked, that the office of our Bard was not to *design* the figure of the horse, or to strike the talismanic coins. They had been already formed and deposited in a sacred stream,* from whence he was, *ritually*, to procure them, and deliver them, *auspiciously*, to their respective claimants. But let us hear his words.

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* I have remarked (Sect. II.) that it was a custom of the Celtæ, *mergere*, to *sink* or *deposit* their gold and silver in sacred lakes or streams. As this rite was performed under the direction of the priests, or Druids, they knew undoubtedly where to find their treasure again, when it was wanted. Thus the Bard speaks of the recovery of the old talismanic pieces of *Trychdrwydd*, the unob-

GORCHAN KYNVELYN.

1.

Pei mi brytwn, pei mi ganwn,
Tardei warchan, gorchegin,
Gweilging, torch Trychdrwyt.
Trychethin trychinfwrch
Kyrchesit, en avon,
Kynn noe geinnyon.
Tyllei garn gaffon,
Rac carneu riwrhon
Ryveluodogyon.
Esgyrn vyrr, vyrrvach varchogyon,
Tyllei Ylvach
Gwryt govurthiach.

CUNOBELINE'S TALISMAN.

1.

Were it that I performed the mystic rite: were it I that sung, a talisman would spring forth—the *high shoots*, the *wand*, the *wreath* of the *unobstructed pervader*.* The most *hideous form*, even that which is cut off from the haunches, should be procured in the river, rather than his beautiful steeds.

The (horse),† which is hoofed with the capped stick,

---

structed pervader, who was the same as *Cunobeline*, *Dominus Sol*; and it is remarkable, that he prefers as most efficacious, those which resemble the Karnbrê coins; and exhibit the monstrous figures, *cut off at the haunches*. These pieces, then, were deemed magical, and duly concealed by the Druids, in order to be re-produced upon some urgent occasion.

* That is, the solar divinity, who is often described by similar epithets. See *Append.* No. II. It appears from this poem, that he was the same as *Kynvelyn*.

† As it is the property of this kind of poetry to be dark and mysterious, the word *March*, *horse*, is not introduced; but the *horse-hoofs*, *horse-tails*, and *horse-*

would penetrate before the high-tailed steeds of those who delight in war.

With its *short bones,* and short, diminutive riders, the horse with the *bird's-beak* would pierce the mean afflicter of heroism.[*]

2.

Ryt gwynn! rae Eingyl,
Yawn llad. Yawn vriwyn vri wyal.
Rac canhwynawl cann,
Lluc yr duc dyvel,
Disgynnial alel,
Y bob dewr dy sel,
Trwy hoel, trwy hemm,
Trwy gibellawr, a gemm,
Ac eur ar dhrein.
A galar dwvyn—dyvyd
Y wynnassed velyn,
E greu oe gylchyn,
Keledic ewyn
Med, mygyr, melyn:
Eil creu oe gylchyn,
Rac cadeu Kynvelyn.

2.

" O blessed ford![†] against the Angles, slaughter is just. The dignified rods[‡] have been duly broken.

Before him who carries the mystery of song, a gleam of light shall conduct the warrior, endowed with power, to descend into every brave enterprise, which his eye shall ken by the *nail,* and the *border,* and the *high-rimmed vessel,* and the *gem,* with the gold which is distributed. And deep woe shall accrue to the yellow-haired afflicter, who is covered with clotted gore, concealing the foam of the re-

---

riders, which are connected with the mystical figure, unequivocally explain the meaning of the Bard. I may add, that the figure is here named *Try-Chethin,* which is a compound of *Cethin, hideous,* the title of the mystical horse, in Taliesin and the Triads.

[*] *Hengist,* who comes under similar descriptions in the songs of the Gododin.

[†] The Bard has now approached the sacred stream, which he propitiates, in order to procure his charm, with auspicious rites.

[‡] The Bardic lots, so often mentioned.

nowned yellow mead.* Again shall he be covered with gore, from the battles of Cunobeline.

3.

Kynvelyn gasnar,
Ysgwn, bryffwn bar,
Goborthiat adar,
A'r denin dwyar,
Dyrreith, grad Voryon,
A dan vordwyt haelon:
Kyvret, kerd Wyllyon,
A'r welling diryon.
Teyrn tut anaw!
Ys meu e gwynaw,
Eny vwyf y dyd taw.
Gomynyat gelyn,
Ehangsett ervyn.
Gochawn kyrd keinmyn
Yw gwarchan Kynvelyn.

3.

Cunobeline the indignant, the lofty leader of wrath, pamperer of the birds of prey, and that divine allurer, *Dyrreith,* of equal rank with *Morion,* shall go under the thighs of the liberal warriors. In equal pace shall the *Gwyllion* proceed, with the benign blessing.

Supreme ruler † of the land or harmony! It is mine to lament him, till I come to the day of silence. Hewer down of the foe, the weapon should have been stretched forth. Amongst the splendid acquisitions of the mystic lore, the most majestic is the talisman of Cunobeline.

4.

Gorchan Kynvelyn, kylchwy wylat,
Etvyn gwr gwned gwyned e wlat.

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* This is a horrid picture of Hengist, issuing forth from the great banquet, covered with the blood of the British nobles. The Bard denounces, that he should, ere long, be stained with his own gore, from the assault of Cunobeline, or the solar divinity: so Aneurin describes his defeat before the *bull* of battle, and the *herds of the roaring Beli.*

† Probably the chief Bard, who was slain at the feast, and deplored by Cuhelyn and Aneurin.

By thus intermixing lamentations for the dead, with the eulogia of his talisman, the Bard seems to insinuate, that the woful catastrophe might have been prevented, by a timely exhibition of his vaunted charm.

Dychiannawr dewr; dychianat
Eidyn gaer, gleissyon glaer,
Kyverthrynneit.
Kein dy en rud, enys, gwerth rud
Volawt, ved, meirch.
Eithinyn neut ynt blennyd!
Gwarchan Kynvelyn, ar Ododin,
Neus goruc, O dyn, dogyn gymhwylleit!
E wayw drwn, oreureit—a'm rodes,
Poet yr lles yw eneit.
Etmygir e, vab Tecvann,
Wrth rif, ac wrth rann.
Pan vyrywyt arveu,
Tros ben cat vleidyeu,
Buan deu, en dyd reit.

4.

The talisman of Cunobeline is the shield * of the festival, with which the man of fortitude repels the affliction of his country.

The brave are lamented; and let the Caer of Eidyn † (the living one) bewail the blue-vested, ‡ illustrious men, who were martyred together. Yet fair is thy ruddy genius,§ O island, meriting the glowing hymn, the mead and the steeds.

Does not the furze bush burst forth into a blaze! And has not the talisman of Cunobeline, upon Gododin,‖ made a sufficient commemoration, with a direct impulse?

As for him who consigned to me the shaft of the gold-

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[*] Hengist had excluded shields from the festival; but, it seems, this charm would repair the injury which ensued upon that occasion, and enable the patriotic warriors to drive out the invader of their country.

Such *infallible* trinkets must have often deceived the wearer; but an ill-omened expression, or the slightest instance of misconduct, was always sufficient to account for the accident, and support the credit of the solemn impostor.

[†] This is mentioned in the Gododin, and in Gwarchan Maelderw. It seems to imply the great temple.

[‡] The Bards were distinguished by their blue garments.

[§] *Gên*, or *En*, a *spirit*, or intelligence—the presiding divinity.

[‖] It should seem, that the Bard imputed his escape from the feast, and consequently the opportunity of composing his Gododin, to the virtue of his talisman.

covered circle,* may it be for the benefit of his soul! He, the son of Tecvan,† shall be honoured, in numbering, and in distribution—the grandson of the *horn of battle*—that pillar of sun-beams. When weapons were hurled over the heads of the wolves of battle, with speed did he come forward in the day of distress.

5.

Trywyr, a thriugeint, a thrychant,
I vreithyell Gatraeth yd aethant:
O'r sawl yt gryssyassant,
Uch med menestri,
Namen tri, nyt atcorsant.
Kynon, a Chadreith, a Chathlew, o Gatnant;
A minheu, o'm creu, dychiorant
Mab coel kerth, vyg werth y a wnaethant;
O eur pur, a dur, ac aryant.
Evnyved, nyt nodet, e cawssant:
Gwarchan kyrd Kynvelyn kyvnovant.

5.

Three heroes, and three score, and three hundred,‡ went to the mixed assembly of Catraeth: of those who presented themselves in haste before the distributors of mead, none but three returned, namely, Kynon, and Cadreith, and Cathlew, of Cadnant—I also, with my bloody wound, was bewailed by the sons of the awful omen (sacred fire), who contributed my ransom in pure gold, and steel, and silver.

The portable sacred pledge, unobserved, have they obtained. Cunobeline's mystic talisman they possess in common.

Thus ends the poem upon the talisman of Cunobeline.

Being now about to take my leave of the reader, I would request his attention to these memorable facts. The old Britons, as their own writings testify against them, in an-age of the greatest public calamity, and after the gospel had been published in their land, neglected the worship of the true god, and sought protection from heathenish rites, charms, and incantations. These vanities deceived them; their crimes were justly punished, and they lost their political existence.

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* This shaft was probably the *Hudlath, magic wand*, or the *Cangen, branch*, which was carried by the divining Bard.

† Perhaps an error of the copyist for *Tenevan*, the traditional father of Cunobeline.

‡ These were the heroes whose fall is mourned in the Gododin; which see.

As to the nature of the charms to which they had recourse, I have shewn, from Taliesin, that they had certain magical figures of horses, impressed upon small pieces of gold and silver, which were delivered to the deluded people as pledges of supernatural assistance; that these figures were sacred to the gods of heathenism; were deemed efficacious for the defence of the country, and were precisely of the same form, as the monsters which we find upon the ancient British coins.

To this I have added Aneurin's account of a talisman, for the protection of the patriotic warrior, and the destruction of the foe. This talisman had those very symbols which we discover on the coins, and they were so adjusted, as to constitute the figure of a *horse*, of the same monstrous form which the coins exhibit, and with the same accompaniments. This talisman was impressed upon gold; many duplicates of it were provided, and it was emphatically styled the talisman of Cunobeline. Its preparation was deemed the highest effort of British magic; it was the shield of the solemn festival, sacred to the Arkite god and goddess, whose names and attributes appear upon the coins; and it was given to the warriors as a certain pledge, that these divinities would attend them in their enterprise.

If all this will not produce conviction, that many of the British coins, published by our antiquaries, are the identical talismans intended by our Bardic magi, I have nothing more to urge. Yet I trust, however this may be determined, that the candid critic will acquit me of having taken up the idea upon slight or improbable grounds, and that he will acknowledge, that the Britons ascribed supernatural virtues to some trinkets, of similar device.

But whilst I leave the original use and application of these coins to the judgment of the public, I must declare my own conviction, that the symbols and inscriptions which I have remarked, agree so minutely with the lore of the Bards and Triads, that it is evident, our writers and engravers had precisely the same system in view. And this unity of design gives the strongest support to the credit of our national monuments.

The fabrication of the coins cannot be stigmatized as a modern device for the purpose of elucidating the Bards: nor will the judicious critic assert, that the works of the Bards are recent forgeries, with a view to the explanation of the coins. Both the one and the other have remained inexplicable for ages; but, in my opinion, they may now be regarded as consistent, not only amongst themselves, but also, allowing for local peculiarities, with the most ancient and general system of mythology, developed by two of the first antiquaries of our age.

The Bards, the mythological Triads, and the coins, are therefore proved by mutual evidence, in which there can be no collusion, to be genuine monuments of the heathenish superstition of Britain.

And they unite in their testimony, that this superstition, notwithstanding the singularity of a few minuter features, could boast of no great and fundamental principle, which was appropriate to itself. Like the general error of other nations, it consisted of certain memorials of the preservation of mankind at the deluge, and some perverted reliques of the patriarchal religion, blended with an idolatrous worship of the host of heaven.

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103	10	gwastradth	gwastraeth
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134	17	Taw	Tarw
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